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THE BAWENDA OF THE SPELONKEN

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THE BAWENDA OF THE SPELONKEN

(TRANSVAAL)

A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PSYCHOLOGY AND FOLK-LORE OF AFRICAN PEOPLES

BY

R. WESSMANN

SPELONKEN, TRANSVAAL COLONY

83298

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN ORIGINAL TEXT

BY

LEO WEINTHAL, F.R.G.S.

CHIEF EDITOR OF 'THE AFRICAN WORLD,' LONDON
EDITOR OF THE 'ANGLO-AFRICAN WHO'S WHO'

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Photo by Blankley, Berlin.

THE AUTHOR, R. WESSMANN.
Formerly a Missionary in the Northern Transvaal.

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INTRODUCTION

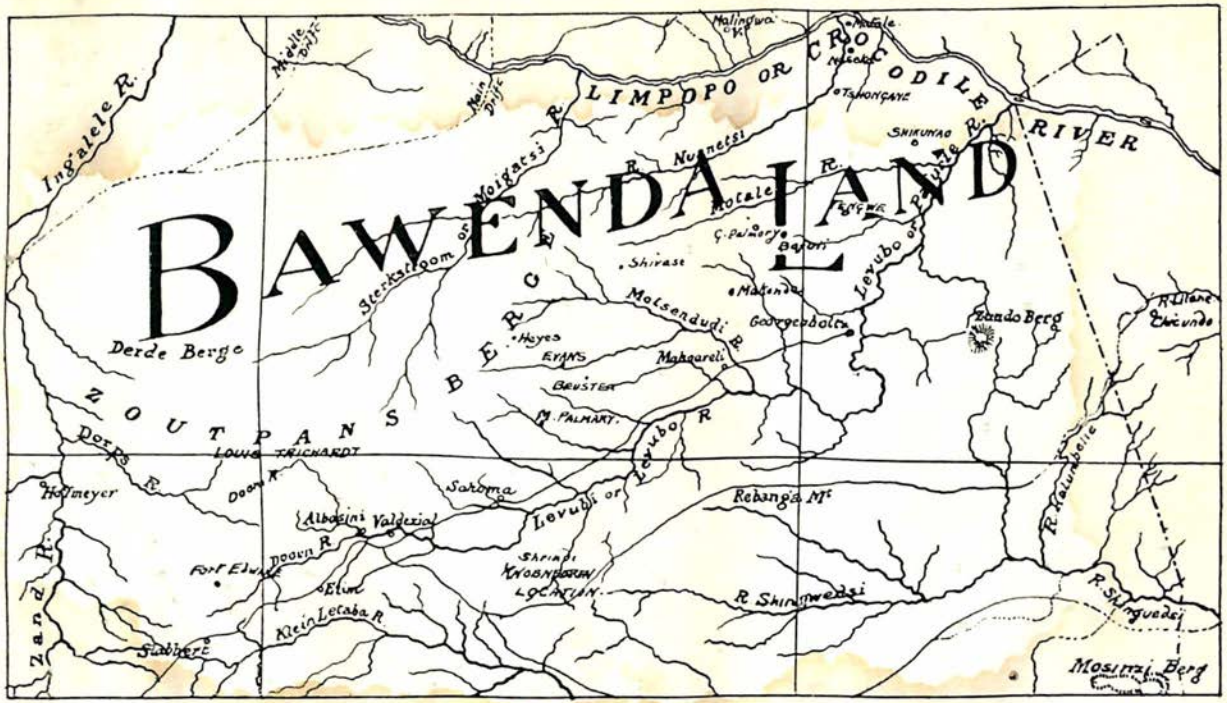
THE African Interior is still only in the earlier stages of civilised progress. Railways and telegraphs are making vast strides, but they have still to overtake and develop enormous areas. The tourist and the trader, the explorer and the prospector, the pioneers of colonisation and enterprise, have after all but skimmed the surface of the Dark Continent, and have here and there lifted the veil of the mysterious and the magnificent. But the full volume of revelation and of interest is as yet in great part unopened, though the pace is ever quickening as the Cape-Cairo Railroad advance proceeds, and the spinal cord of the Dark Continent is thus submitted to the discoverer's eye and the analyst's assessments.

The land and its resources, its wealth and its potentials, lend themselves more readily to the perceptions than do the African native races. The latter are more secretive, retentive, and conservative of modes than is the country of their origin. But the old order changeth. The native African advance has begun. Slowly but surely the character of the greater tribes is yielding to a transition bred of intercourse with Europeans. Many tribal traits

have in fact already disappeared. Most noticeable, perhaps, is the waning of the war-spirit and its more immediate influences, traditions, and prescriptions. But the romance lingers. Folk-lore dies hard. Ancestral codes and ceremonial, whether religious or legal, resist with vigour the aggressions of civilisation. Paradox though it may seem, what matters still and most in native life is not the material but the immaterial. The conservatism of the African in this respect seems scarcely less than insurmountable. His spirit is not to be quenched, at least not yet. Perhaps it is not even properly understood. Yet the afflatus of the African spirit is not less than a fascination; subtle, it may be, and indefinable, but indubitably magnetic. It is likewise manifold in its modes and phenomena. The voice of the Veld commands alike the student of mysteries, the devotee of the sciences, and the most materialistic of pioneers.

These are but a few of the more important deductions from the author's own experience and years of observation among, more particularly, the tribes of the Northern Transvaal. They will serve, he hopes, as at least a fitting framework to such a volume as the present, which he designs as an inducement to more profound realisations of the real and inner life of Africa and the Africans. This volume pretends to be no more than a collection of cameos from that real life of Africa. But at least it is reliable, and as such it may charm. Reliability is still rare.

THE AUTHOR.



MAP OF BAWENDALAND.

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BAWENDALAND

THERE are no districts of South Africa more exquisite to the senses nor invested with greater romance than the lands in the Northern Transvaal which are the demesne of the Bawenda. This tribe was the last to surrender its independence. It comprises about one-third of the entire population of the Zoutpansberg district. The tribe's terrain is the whole of the rugged mountain country between the Levuvu and the Limpopo rivers. These mountains are still clothed with rich green and wholly virgin forests. It is a land of flood withal; for numerous rivers flow down from it to the plains, and still await utilisation for the profitable development of the country, which is of exceptional fertility, and famous for such fruits as oranges, lemons, bananas, and the mango. In addition to these, rubber, vine, sugar cane, coffee plants, cotton, rice, earth-nuts, and maize are abundantly in evidence. The last-named is the general food-stuff of the natives, and is cultivated in large quantities. The recently proved mineral wealth of the territory, notably copper and diamonds, is exceptional.

The Bawenda are probably only a part of a greater tribe whose dwellings are looked for on the

Congo, where, according to the oldest Portuguese maps, a people of the same name is still living. As the Matabele separated from King Chaka, and after their trek through the Transvaal settled in Rhodesia, so must the Bawenda have (during wars) migrated to the South.

Like nearly all African tribes they have no *litera scripta*; but their oral traditions betray the existence of more than 450 tribal proverbs. The language with its eighteen different classes of words is highly appreciated at the present moment, as it is claimed to be the key to other Bantu languages in the interior of Africa. Yet the etymologists must make haste, for the Bawenda lingua is like to be supplanted by the Basuto or another tongue. The ideal possession of the Bawenda is the woman; and they shirk no exertion in order to acquire as many wives as possible. The people are characteristically *bon vivants*. They are, moreover, cowardly unto disgust; yet on the other hand violent unto murder.

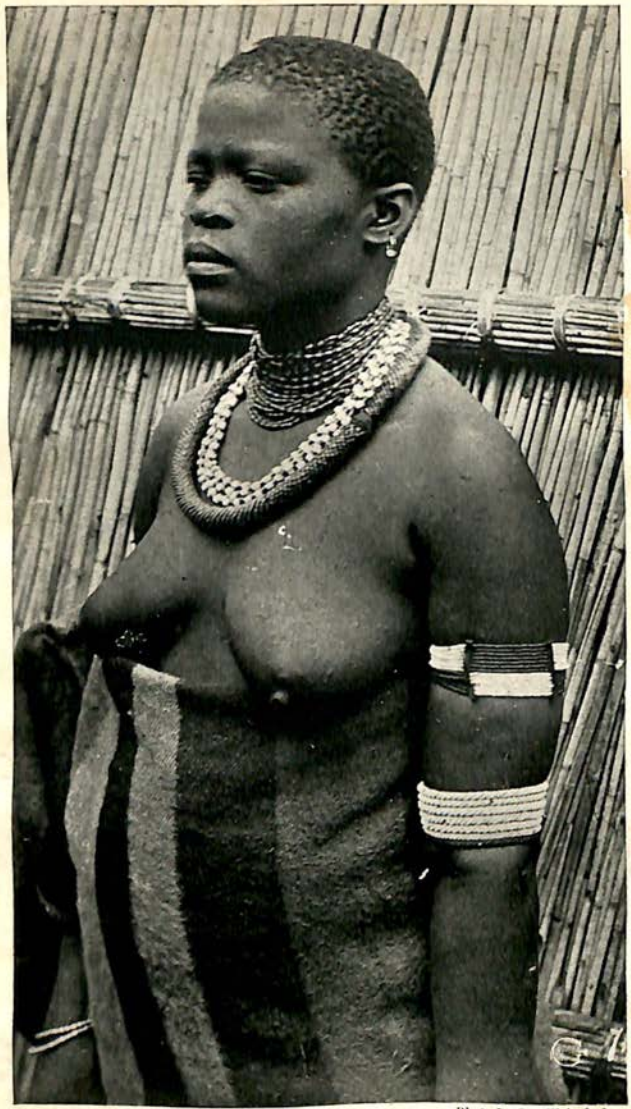

Photo by Leo Weinthal.

A NORTHERN TRANSVAAL NATIVE BELLE.

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Bawenda Rulers

From time immemorial the Bawenda have been monarchists. Their kings have descended by direct line from "Joho ea ndoho," which means "elephant's head," who governed the whole people, and resided on the Dzelele river, where the ruins of his "great place" are still to be seen. These are regarded as sacred by the natives. This chief is alleged by the native myths to be still living—a sort of counterpart to the Emperor Barbarossa in German history. The natives still assert that they are waiting for his return, in order that he may once more unite all Bawenda under his sceptre and govern them in justice and peace. Socialistic ideas, and agitation against the existing order of things, therefore do not find any support amongst these people, and disturbers of the social order would simply be banished, or, perhaps, be "eaten up." Bawendaland has been divided into many larger or smaller provinces, which are governed by sub-chiefs and connected by tracks with the capital. Without the aid of postal or telegraph service the sub-chiefs can quickly assemble if the chief desires their attendance at his capital; such is the mystery yet effectiveness of the "Kaffir telegraph."

The wealth of the chief consists in wives, who often reach forty in number and represent a considerable value in cattle, and, further, in cattle which he receives in payment for his daughters. Moreover, he cultivates large tracts of land, the

country doing socage-service for him. On payments of debts the chief receives his share; and if one of his subjects has a windfall he does not keep the whole benefit to himself, but hands over a part fixed by law to the chief (to whom also belong all the skins of all game killed in his realm). The largest revenues, however, accrued until very recently from the confiscation of entire family possessions, viz. cattle, women, children, and valuables which came to the chief on the occurrence of a death, when somebody else was named as the cause of death. According to the superstition of the people nobody dies from natural causes, but is always killed by somebody else, either by sorcery or the evil eye. This used to be decided by the medicine-man of the tribe; and on his pronouncing the name, such murderer was killed if he did not succeed in escaping in time, leaving all his possessions behind.

The work of the chief consists in administering the law and entertaining his guests and legations. These are daily received at the gate of the village by a specially appointed official, who after duly announcing their arrival conducts them to the chief's presence. On such occasions the beer-pot plays a very prominent part; and the chief is always surrounded by spongers who praise his deeds and repeat his sayings, while incidentally partaking of all the good dishes that are offered to the guests. The younger women, who live in their own houses in close proximity to the chief's residence, act as his servants and cooks; they approach him on their knees only, and leave him

in the same manner. The older women live mostly as village elders in the different villages all over the country, and put in an appearance at the chief's residence at their own choice, usually bringing with them special dishes and presents, and staying for a longer or shorter period. All the chief's personal adornments and all articles inside his house, as well as all his movements, have their special names. None of his subjects must possess a finer house than he. His children play with the children of the other inhabitants in the streets; they are not recognisable as the chief's children, and receive no education whatever. In higher esteem is held the chief's first wife, who also receives a special name, and even more so the chief's mother, who is often on important occasions chosen as arbitrator. Her word is mostly decisive. The chief also appoints the times for sowing and reaping, a specially qualified doctor being called in, who by his medicine is supposed to fertilise the soil! The death of a chief is kept secret for a long time, during which a successor is chosen. In consequence of the large number of grown-up sons of the chief there have been many sanguinary wars of succession. The dead chief's body, sewn into an ox-hide, remains in the house until it is conveyed to a sacred forest, where it is buried amongst the kings' graves. Sometimes, for instance in the case of Tengoe and Lambane, the remains were, according to an ancient custom, burned, and the ashes thrown into the river.

Life in a Chief's Kraal

As the Bawenda build their villages in thick undergrowth or on steep mountain sides, in order to be more secure against raids, the approaches to such villages offer frequently great difficulties; but especially is this the case with a chief's kraal, which, traditionally, is even more hidden, and often rendered by human hands even more inaccessible than nature made it. We will suppose that we are now paying a visit to one of the most prominent chiefs, who represents a genuine Bawenda tribe and looks back on an interesting history, viz. the well-known chief Shewasse. We leave the general highroad of his country and follow a narrow foot-path, which leads us through two rather difficult mountain streams and onwards, uphill and downhill in many roundabout ways, through heavy brush-wood and high grass, so thick that a horseman could easily conceal himself in it. In rainy weather this journey would, in consequence of the slippery clay, offer almost insurmountable difficulties, and it might become necessary to use the hands as well as feet in order to climb the steep hills; but after a lengthy tramp we at last reach the village, which lies in the midst of rich vegetation and is surrounded by high trees, on the branches of which large numbers of monkeys are seen gaily playing about.

It is ten o'clock in the morning. The cool morning and mountain air still keeps back the blazing rays of the ascending sun. It is also the

Photo by Leo Weinthal.

IN A NATIVE KRAAL OF THE SPELONKEN.

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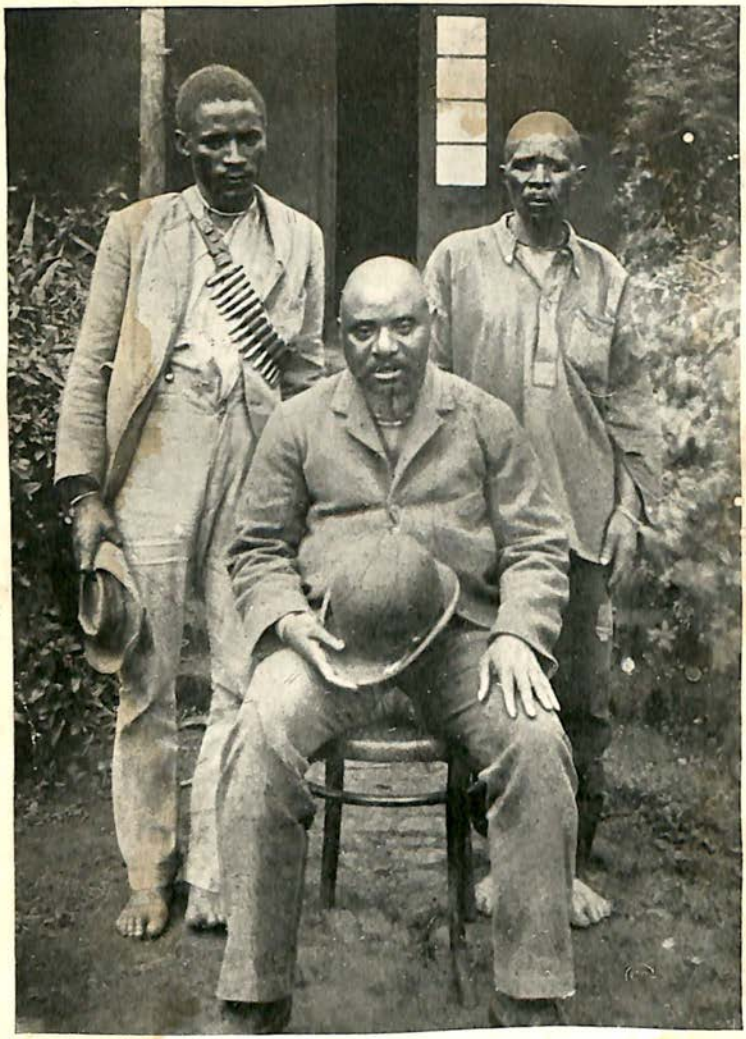
hour of the chief's "morning-beer," and a murmur of animated voices reaching us from the kraal suggests the presence of a blithe company. The large round huts of the native capital lie closely before us—a city without symmetry—and look for all the world just as if they had once danced to a sweet melody and suddenly stopped in disorder. The village elder, who has been informed of our arrival by children, is already in attendance at the entrance, in order to conduct us, according to custom, into the village. While he is announcing our arrival to the chief, who is still resting in his apartments, we leave our guide, and, being acquainted with the village, take our way to the large council-hall, which has several doors. Here the men from the surrounding kraals have already made themselves at home, and are beckoning and nodding to us in friendly greeting as we enter.

It is the privilege of the Bawenda chiefs to keep their visitors waiting for a lengthy time before they show themselves in person—no matter of what colour such visitors may be. Thus they show their dignity, and incidentally gain time to consider what present they may offer to their guest. Frequently a sheep or a goat has to be bought or borrowed in the neighbourhood when none are available in the chief's immediate kraal.

In the meantime the hall has filled to the last seat; for our visit has quickly attracted the guests who were sitting in the courtyard, and they evidently expect to hear some news from us. A large beer-pot is carried along by a woman and deposited in the centre of the assembly. Suddenly

the animated chatter is interrupted by the chief's rather thick voice in close proximity. All eyes are turned upon him, and his large, smiling, full-moon-shaped face fits the chequered company exactly. Very slowly, leaning on every prop of the verandah of the houses, he approaches, finally stopping at the entrance to the hall, partly in order to shake hands with us, partly to regain his breath; for every movement, even the shortest, has proved a great strain for him, in consequence of his enormous obesity. He is clad in trousers and a shirt, the uppermost button of which stands, on account of his fat neck, immediately below his chin. Slowly he settles down on a mat spread for him on the verandah before the entrance of the hall. He is thus able to watch the proceedings both inside and outside the hall. The moment he squats, is the instant of the customary greeting in accordance with Bawenda ceremony. Immediately the assembly shows a dog-like submission. Everybody bows low, heads nearly touching the floor, and with hands clasped in front they shout in unison and for several minutes such salutes as, "God of heaven and earth," "handsome man with four eyes," "lion," "beast," "goat-stable," "cattle-kraal," "ox," "light of the world," "beast of prey," and other similar flattering expressions commenting on the chief's great wealth or splendid qualities, real or imaginary. Well pleased and glowing with satisfaction he lets his eyes muster on the assembly, and makes some jocular remarks, which, regardless of their merit, have, needless to mention, the desired effect. Soon, however, the conversation on the news of the day,



MY CHIEF MADZEBANDULA,

Who protected me during the Mpefo War; he was Head Induna to the late Magato.

To face page 17.

which takes the place of a newspaper with the natives, is resumed. In the meantime the chief cup-bearer has filled the large cups and handed them to this or that native without any special selection. The chief has meanwhile made himself very comfortable on his mat. In order, however, that he may not overbalance himself, a nearly nude maiden supports him on her back, whilst another girl serves as his footstool. Still another lady sits in front of him, almost like a wax-statue, holding up a tin tray with his own always filled cup, so that he may take a drink in comfort whenever he pleases. On his left, another girl holds his silver snuff-box, from which he now and then allows somebody else to take a pinch. Now and then he takes a long draught from his cup, always closing his bulging eyes as he does so, and every draught being accompanied by enthusiastic shouts from the assembly, such as, "Lion," "handsome man with four eyes," "beast of prey," as mentioned before. In the same manner, any coughing or clearing of his throat is accompanied by similar praises and flatteries from his loyal admirers.

The chief is the picture of joyful life and most complete contentment. With smiling face he takes part now and then in the conversation of his entourage; but otherwise his time is devoted to his guests, with whom he freely converses in his own language without an interpreter, the main topics being the political and other latest events. These he comments upon entirely from his point of view, and sometimes in a very drastic or rather sarcastic manner. I have often attempted to take

a snapshot of the interesting scene, but regret that all efforts have always been unsuccessful. Photographers are met with energetic opposition, as this chief, in common with other Bawenda, fears lest he should die after such procedure, and they never like to see the picture of anybody dead.

With noble Africans protruding stomachs are an indication of dignity and at the same time appear to command respect. Frequently this chief has been reported dead, and only a few of his intimate white friends were able to inform him of this, whereupon he always answered triumphantly: "It is my enemies who do not desire me to live." By the bye, the Bawenda say that it means long life for a man to be often reported dead.

The chief adversary and the exact opposite of the fat Shewasse was his neighbour, the tall, thin chief Pafuri, who, in consequence of his agility and speed in running, claimed that no horse could beat him in a race. He called himself "cloud" and was called so by his subjects, because he often danced, and in dancing celebrated in a song his descent from a cloud! Both chiefs are relatives by marriage in the closest possible degree; for the one was the other's father-in-law and son-in-law at the same time! In spite of this close and rather uncommon relationship they hated one another like poison. Pafuri knew no greater pleasure than to caricature at great indabas the clumsy gait of Shewasse, or to visit his enemy's country at night and to return at dawn to his own without having been caught. Further, he often tried to publicly ridicule and divulge Shewasse's secrets (a crime

which would have cost any other subject his life). Words do not kill, however, otherwise these two would have long ago killed each other by talk. During their lengthy reigns—lasting for more than sixty years—these two men only met once face to face. This happened at the first annexation of the Transvaal. The Governor, Mr. Shepstone, penetrated into Bawendaland and invited the Bawenda chiefs to a meeting at Spelonken, where he was willing to listen to their mutual complaints. The place is known up to the present by the name of "Kommandoboom," from a tree standing by the roadside. Shewasse and Pafuri were amongst the chiefs who had put in an appearance. Their affairs having been settled, the missionary, Mr. Bevster, suggested to them that, being so closely related, they ought to make peace with one another. This suggestion both willingly accepted, and after a grand and imposing ceremony, specially arranged for this purpose, had been performed to the huge entertainment of all present, the two chiefs sat down on a mat and heartily embraced each other. The reconciliation, however, lasted for a very short time only, as soon after they began to quarrel as of yore, and would have come to blows had it not been for Mr. Shepstone's personal interference.

Thus their permanent enmity continued, and for years they incited their respective subjects against each other. Wars and raids were ceaseless, and no white government entirely succeeded in preventing the murder of many innocent women and children. Even the public roads were avoided

so much, on account of the insecurity of the country, that ultimately they were overgrown by grass and bush and disappeared. Fortunately both the chiefs died soon after the renewed occupation of the Transvaal by the British forces a few years ago.

THE BAWENDA CHIEF MPEFO AND HIS INDUNAS.

WALL OF RUINED CITY OF DZATA.
First Town built by the Bawenda.

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Bawenda Family Life

The opinion is often advanced that the blacks in their simplicity and when freed from their own (native) oppressors become really a happy and contented people. They certainly know nothing of the extravagant luxury of European cities nor of the vanity and the extravagances of European society. Yet, on the other hand, they are also quite ignorant of the many misfortunes and the poverty of so many European families. Just as the bird builds his nest, so every native father of a family builds his own house, and has consequently no expenses to meet in this connection. Timber to support the masonry work he finds plentifully in the forest, and the beams are easily cut to a certain length and pointed at the base where they are fixed in the ground. The whole round box is then, with the exception of the doors and windows, closed in with horizontally fixed lathes, the timber for which is also taken from the woods. The whole framework is then covered with clay, which is smoothed by the women's hands; after which the walls are then painted out in white or some other colour. The roof is constructed from thin lathes and grass; and, after it is finished, lifted on top of the house, all the neighbours gladly giving their help in this. Long grass for thatching the roof is always obtainable, frequently in the immediate environs of the new building; and after the thatch has been fixed in a special and typical manner, the

smooth and fine-looking roof withstands the highest winds and is waterproof even during the fiercest rains.

Work is performed both by men and women, the latter, however, being by far the more industrious. The bountiful nature of the climate and the fertility of the soil obviate any great effort for the support of a native family. Generally speaking the Bawenda are improvident, literally taking no thought for the morrow, and entertaining no anxiety whatsoever for the future. A few months' work furnishes them with food for the whole year, and additional wealth accrues from cattle breeding, which is profitable, and in which the native takes a real and keen interest. Happy Bawenda! He knows of no tradesmen's bills; neither has he to pay expensive law costs nor fear troubles from the Income Tax Surveyors. Public-houses and gambling dens are unknown in the country, and for drinking outside his abode, he has nothing to pay, but may by his mere arrival invite himself everywhere. He rises early in the morning, prepares his snuff, and gives his wives, who live in the surrounding huts, what they want for the day. Then he sets out either for a hunting expedition or for his day's work, which is frequently suddenly interrupted in order to attend some festivity or another. Perhaps his curiosity may also persuade him to attend at the law-court, where he may like to say a word or two on behalf of one party; or he may possibly sleep in the shade of a tree for the whole day, returning home in the evening quite content, and responsible to nobody

as to the manner in which he spent time, which is absolutely of no value to him.

The Bawenda woman, however, has more regular work. She looks after the house, prepares the meals, and does field work. Where both men and wor en engage in the fields the result of their work is kept strictly separate, and each can dispose of his part as he or she likes. Sometimes the meals are provided from the man's, and sometimes from the wives' portion; and any surplus is sold by either for his or their own benefit. The wife usually plants near her dwelling sweet potatoes, the seeds for which she obtains free of charge from a neighbour whose batates have already farther progressed in growth. The shoots are then cut and simply put into the soil. The ground-nut, which is much appreciated here, has already found its way to Europe. Maize is stored in large holes dug in the ground, having only a small opening at the surface and widening towards the bottom. Frequently their storing capacity reaches 100 bags of maize. The chief Pafuri once secured a band to perform music in such a store-hole, all the black musicians finding room below ground.

The women have, however, considerable liberties. They go to their mother when they please, visit a friend or go to some festivity without in the least bothering about their husband, who must then look after his own food. The child is fed by the mother frequently up to the fourth year and even beyond; and as long as it is small the mother carries it with her on her back wherever she goes. The custom is that before another child is born the preceding one

must be able to walk; and the mother-in-law and the moral law of the country watch over the carrying out of this. A violation of this custom is considered an outrage, and involves general and public contempt. Should a man desire to gladden his wife's days by making her presents, he buys brass or iron rings for her arms and legs in such quantities that a wife may find her husband's love a rather heavy burden. The education of the children leaves very much to be desired, and whether they are still small or grown up they may indulge in all kinds of liberties without being punished.

The Bawenda have a splendid carriage and their backs are not bent by work. Amongst the younger generations there are fine figures who endeavour to improve their appearance by partial shaving of their hair and wearing of strings of beads. Their dress is on account of the warm climate naturally very scanty, and often a thin blanket is the only thing worn; but they can stand great heat as well as cold. Those who have already come into contact with civilisation often leave their fathers' native fashions and attire according to their own fancy. In such cases one often meets with the funniest possible combinations of European clothes, from india-rubber and ladies' shoes to silk top hats and evening coats; which would often appear like an irony of civilisation were it not for the great dignity and the almost profound earnestness of the wearer.

Some of the Bawenda are already so much ruled by this vanity that they buy new European suits of latest fashion and cut. One day a petty chief

with whom I was well acquainted asked me to procure him a suit such as I was wearing, but with the particular instructions that it was not to be different to mine in any detail and also to be of the same colour. When I asked him why such equality was wanted, he answered: "Certainly such equality is absolutely necessary. For, look, we are friends a long while and resemble one another inwardly, and now we must express also this by outward tokens. For instance, when I walk about in my country and my subjects see me approach from a distance, they must stop with astonishment and uncertainty and must not know who it is that approaches. Some must say, 'It is our chief'; others, 'No, it is his friend'; and then they will get so excited that they will knock big holes into each other's heads."

Bawenda stomachs are more sensitive than their hearts, and consequently eating and drinking play a great part in their lives. Their dishes are manifold, and they eat much without, however, suffering from indigestion or other ailments. Their chief dish consists of maize, which is boiled to a pap and then piled up on large wooden dishes in the shape of pancakes, which, on cooling, can be easily separated.

Great care is taken in preparing the mealies. This is hard work for a woman who has to provide for a large family. Women and girls are often working the whole night through in the special milling-houses, covered with flour-dust and singing or chatting in time, not dropping their stamps until the mealies can be brought into the fresh air for drying. The women sit on the floor, on which is

fixed a round wooden trough, into which they put the previously moistened maize, crushing it with a heavy wooden club, which entails great physical exertion. They first remove the husks and then stamp the maize into fine flour.

By this means are produced various kinds of grindings, which are cleverly sorted according to their fineness. This ground maize, beginning with the finest Vienna, is used in cooking, and is already being sought after by many Europeans.

The Bawenda are vegetarians, nature providing them with countless varieties of vegetables, which all grow wild, often in the immediate surroundings of their huts, on the roadside, or in their fields. More important to the Bawenda is, however, a piece of meat; and he will never shirk a long journey if he can procure such a treat at its finish. In his eagerness he does not even despise the meat of game which has died in the Veld, though it may already be in a state of decay and have even quite changed colour to a distinct greenish tint, being of a decidedly *haut goût.*

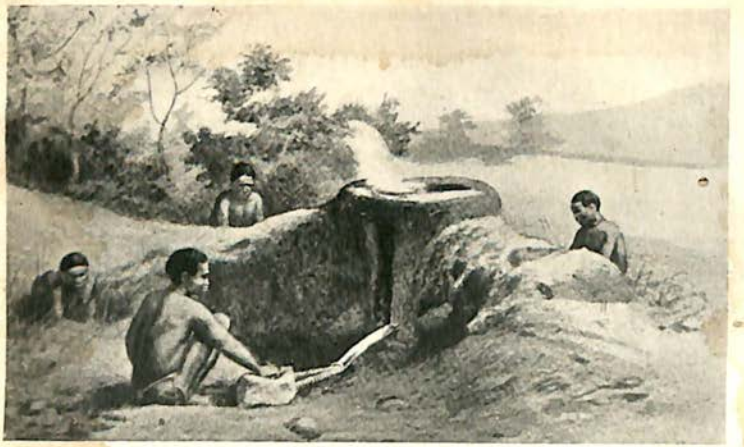
Like every other nation in the world the Bawenda have their special national dishes of delicacies. Amongst these are locusts, which are boiled in large pots and then dried, after which the wings and legs are removed and the bodies stored in pots, thus being always available for use. The large flying ants of the country are also considered a delicacy; but, above all, a species of large fat caterpillar, which is collected from trees, and dried and sold to the consumers by roaming traders, is in great request, and as a delicious item in the

menu of the day is mostly procured in exchange for money only. The Bawenda retire early o'nights except when the moon "am shining," and they make a rule of rising early in the morning. Their first walk is to the general fireplace, which is situated at the exit of the village, usually below a large tree. Here also, on an adjacent square, the cattle are milked or slaughtered. In the evening the men sit round this big fire in friendly converse with one another, or occupy themselves with some kind of work, such as tanning a hide or carving some domestic instrument, the Bawenda being skilled in a great many crafts.

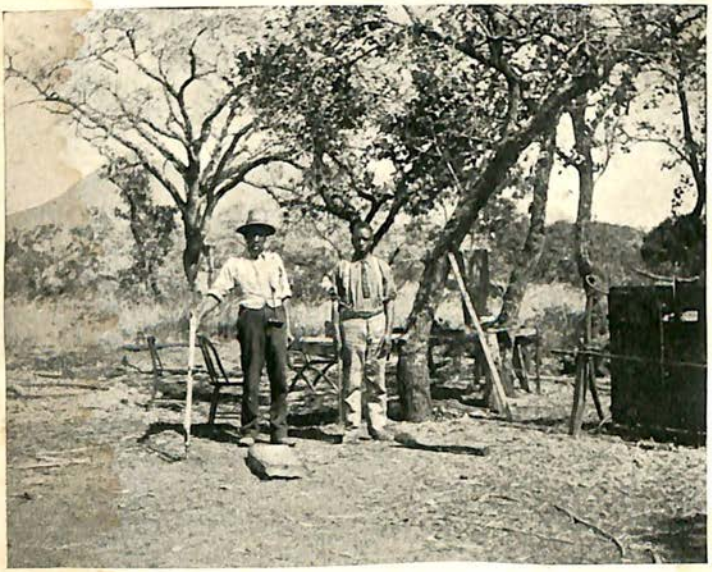
Bawenda Art and Industry

Amongst European nations there are great and mighty individuals who attain immortal glory in Art. There are, however, amongst the black Africans also men of artistic gifts, who do not seek advertisement, but whose art undoubtedly possesses a mysterious charm.

Far be it from me to compare the modest art of these "gloryless" ones with European culture. I only want to remind my readers that here gifts and forces are already visible among these blacks which must originate from an internal spiritual activity. The most prominent art in Bawendaland is that of the forge. Everywhere in the country one can find old dilapidated furnaces which served for producing and melting iron. The ore was derived from the so-called iron-mountains on the other bank of the Lewuwu river and was carried in baskets to Bawendaland, where it was treated. The furnaces are about 3 feet in circumference, and built (of clay) right into the ground. By means of small holes at the bottom, and bellows, a blast was sent into the furnace enabling the temperature to be raised and maintained at white-heat. Though a small proportion of the iron was always lost in this process, the bulk was found finally in the shape of a large block at the bottom of the furnace. Thus the raw material for making different articles was obtained. Communal workshops were used, mostly situated near the public road, and consisting



NATIVE IRONWORKERS IN THE SPELONKEN IN DAYS OF OLD.
From Walter Distant's *A Naturalist in the Transvaal.*



AT MPEFO'S KRAAL TO-DAY.
"Under the spreading Mimosa tree the village blacksmiths stand.'

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often merely of a shelter against the sun, supported by a few props. The interior of the forge was very primitive, a large, flat-topped stone serving as an anvil; other stones as hammers; and wooden sticks had to take the place of tongs. Charcoal, which was used for forging, was obtained from specially suited kinds of forest timber. Thus all agricultural implements and, moreover, axes, arrow-heads, assegais, knives, etc., were produced in the Bawenda country until European industry with its cheap productions killed the interesting and ancient native iron industry. It would occupy too much time if I were to enumerate all the different branches of art of the Bawenda in every detail; for there is hardly any sphere of industry in which they do not show their natural aptitude and skill. They can produce earthenware pots and jars of most convenient and practical shapes; clothing, powder, furniture. They tan skins, repair rifles and shoes, furnish Government schools with teachers, build European houses on contract, and repair or renew cart-wheels. The country itself furnishes the raw materials, which the natives handle with very primitive tools only in the absence of the better European implements.

Even the children make their own toys. They model cows, oxen, and horses of clay, or construct little carriages or old Boer carts of soft wood. With these toys, which are most remarkably natural, the children play in the roads. The Bawenda have keen eyes, clever hands, and, above all, sound common-sense. Music is greatly practised and well understood by these tribes. It belongs to

their pleasures and constitutes an important feature of their whole communal life. Without it their social intercourse would be poor indeed. Nevertheless, their music does not up to now suffer from over-production, and still remains a special treat, to which the people invariably look forward with pleasure. Of course they have not the remotest idea of the high art in European music, the merit of which they fail to understand and are totally unable to appreciate. If it were not so, the Bawenda mine-workers on returning from the gold-fields would certainly tell their people at home all about the music of the Europeans. In this, as in many other things, they prefer simplicity, being very conservative in their own inventions, which they do not give up easily, and loving the accustomed sounds of their own harmonies.

Quite the finest and most perfect of their few musical instruments is the *Bela*, which is mostly met with at the large kraals, and not only secures high appreciation for the clever player, but often astonishes Europeans. This instrument consists of a number of nicely carved thin wooden sticks of from three to four inches wide and exactly tuned. The Bela is played by means of india-rubber hammers; sometimes even two players perform a duet on the instrument with considerable skill. The tone of this instrument is improved by a sounding-board, consisting of a number of peculiarly shaped long-necked pumpkin bottles, the mouths of which are closed by thin membranes of strong spiders'-web, which give the tone a rather weird and peculiar charm.

It is only natural that wherever merry folks gather some dancing should prevail. This is, however, a subject more easily dealt with in a picture than by a verbal description. Like most native tribes the Bawenda have a number of dances, which are only performed in the capital and which have many different meanings. Amongst these is the Domba dance, which usually takes place once a year; and in order to be allowed to take part in this, the native has to pay ten shillings and even more per head. The young men and girls of the whole country attend at this dance, which lasts for several weeks and is regarded as a kind of public declaration of coming of age. All Bawenda dances with this exception differ vastly from the European dances. In the Domba dance, however, the dancers form up in a long chain, which moves in a circle to the accompaniment of one large and several small drums. Whereas European dancers show their art by flying along in pairs and turning in wild haste on the smoothly polished floor, the Bawenda dances, which take place in the open air, are more in the nature of musical drill. Here every one plays his own part, but remains at the same time a member of the whole, turning with all performers now in this, now in that direction, and anon making circular jumps, the feet often being put down in rather forcible fashion. It must be admitted that the whole dance from beginning to end is at all times a picture of perfect harmony and a spectacle of greatest interest.

There are also dances for special villages, which may be arranged at any time and which the

neighbours may join. All these dances are public and no charge is made for joining, as they do not necessitate any expenses.

During harvesting time the different chiefs despatch to each other special dancing-troupes as a sign of honour. Whilst this custom is highly appreciated, it often constitutes a kind of burden for the recipient, as he has to entertain the visiting dancers for several days. During the last year, the dancers sent to the paramount chief, Mpefo, consumed no less than five oxen, representing a cash value of £50.

THEN

A NATIVE DANCE IN BAWENDALAND SOME YEARS AGO.

AND NOW.

CONVERTS TO CIVILISATION IN ZOUTPANSBERG.

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The Bawenda Salute

Very comical to European eyes appears the manner in which the Bawenda salute one another, and in this they differ entirely from all other known native tribes in the Transvaal. The highest mark of honour, as we have already seen, is accorded to the chief; the natives, however, salute each other in a most respectful manner. When two persons happen to meet in the road, or even if husband and wife meet in their fields or in their home, they both quickly sit down on the ground. The latest-comer extends his hands in front of himself, lays the tips of his fingers together, and exclaiming, "Lion," "beast of prey," or some similar expression which he may choose, bends down to the ground. The other replies immediately in the same manner. An even more interesting spectacle is a whole assembly replying in the same graceful manner to the salute of a single person. Still more charmingly impressive are these salutes when performed by women or children. Even the herdsmen in the fields salute each other in this same way. Young girls and women kneel down as soon as a superior person comes towards them, and remain kneeling until that person has passed, whereupon they resume their way.

Should one person meet another who is occupied with some work, the salute is adapted to that work.

The plural is always, however, employed, as if one were addressing several people. Little children are called "thou," adults are addressed as "you," and the chief or some other dignitary is addressed in the plural. Let us now look at

Social Life, Laws and Customs

Social problems which are perplexing modern civilised countries are unknown to the Bawenda. The sun of happiness is always shining clearly for them, and of secret tears and the canker of heart-ache the Bawenda knows as yet nothing. Orphanages are unknown here, and neither State nor Municipality need build them. Orphans are generally received kindly and willingly at once by other families, especially if they should *not* possess any relatives. Nor would the latter try to evade that duty. Children, moreover, do not cause any appreciable expenses; for it is considered by these natives that where there are already some children eating from one pot there will be something left for an additional one. Girls are specially appreciated, as they are a source of revenue to their parents, who receive cattle when the daughters of the house marry. Boys are, however, also welcome, as they look after the cattle. When they attain the marriageable age they are provided with a wife, their relatives usually contributing to raise the required money or cattle amongst themselves.

There are no societies to provide against im-

poverishment and begging; for real poverty does not exist as long as a man has relatives. To the shame of many Europeans it must here be mentioned that the blacks willingly help their fellow-men, and that a black man considers it an honour to help any of his needy relatives. Begging is, curiously enough, esteemed a virtue, and is mostly a privilege reserved for well-to-do people and chiefs, who regard it as a means of making friendships, or of satisfying themselves as to somebody's friendship by some visible outward gift as token. What is given to another man in this manner may later on be got back in the same manner. Invalids and old people are provided for as a matter of course by their relatives, who do not consider their keep as a burden. Only in picturesque travellers' tales are they exposed to death by starving, or being left to the mercy of wild animals.

All sources and causes which might seriously disturb the common weal or the external peace are stopped by ancient customs. Wood, fire, and water are considered common property, which no one person may withhold from another. Usury is not known, and a usurer would not find room for his pernicious trade, but would be driven out of the country with the greatest contempt. Indeed a pauper has many privileges. If he should be in need he soon finds sympathetic hearts and open hands. If he should settle down in some village as a stranger, he would be provided for until he could cultivate his own field and provide his own food. Should he lack the necessary seeds, he can obtain them from a neighbour—to whom he returns

them without interest when he has had a good harvest.

Should anybody regret a bargain made he can at any time reverse it. Purchased cattle (as, for instance, a cow which does not get calves) may be returned after years, and the former owner is bound to take it back and reverse the bargain. If a purchased cow, goat, or sheep dies soon after the purchase, the fat and meat of the dead animal is taken to the former owner, who accepts it, and pointing to his cattle kraal, says that it has not died yet, by which he means that he will choose or "form," as the correct expression says, another cow, goat, or sheep to supplant the dead one. This unwritten law applies also to bought pieces of dress if the purchaser should regret his bargain. A man may send his wife back to his parents-in-law if she does not present him with children. In that case he is given either a younger sister or another wife, or the purchase price is returned to him without any ill-feeling arising therefrom in the family, or the old friendship being disturbed.

A debt never superannuates. On the death of a father the son pays his (the father's) debts, and *vice versa*. If it should prove to be necessary, the relatives will assist in the settlement. On the death of a father the eldest son takes over all property of the family; but at the same time he saddles himself with the duty of providing for all his younger brothers and sisters. If there are not sufficient cattle to meet the expenses of providing wives for all his brothers, one or the other must wait until the children of the eldest brother have

grown up. If there are any girls amongst them, the father sells them as soon as possible, and uses the cattle which he receives in payment for the purchase of a wife for his brother, the latter not being under any obligation or liability.

The payment of a debt often takes years. Thus some time ago an old man, grey-haired, and bent by the burden of his years, asked for a letter to his son-in-law in Mashonaland begging him to pay the rest of a debt which he was still owing. It may have been thirty years ago that the old man had sold his right to hunt elephants to his son-in-law, who had not paid his debt. These outstanding obligations are often very chequered and date back many years. If a neighbour's property is damaged—say a borrowed pot is broken or another borrowed article is damaged—no compensation is claimed, and the accident is considered as "misadventure." The person to whom the misadventure happened asks another person to act as mediator, to inform the owner of the damaged article of the misadventure and ask his pardon, or, to use the Bawenda term, "He makes peace without making many words." In case a field is damaged by straying cattle, the owner of the cattle is not held responsible for the damage; but the sufferer has to turn to the hired herdsman by whose inattention the damage has been caused. The owner of the damaged field has then the right to administer a sound thrashing to the neglectful herdsman, who must take it without grumbling if he has not thought it wiser to seek another sphere of work. If, however, cattle break out of the kraal during

the night and damage anything, the owner of the cattle the next morning sends to the people who suffered the damage, and expresses in an eloquent message his sincere regret for the damage done by the cattle at night when everybody was asleep. Such an apology is always accepted, and the matter is settled without compensation being offered or asked for. Nobody must enjoy an exceptional windfall of fortune by himself. Should a cow give birth to twin calves, he must share this luck with the chief. If anybody in the village kills a head of cattle he must send the village elder his share, viz. a hind-leg. The Bawenda are fond of sharing with one another; and a gift that somebody unexpectedly receives in the presence of others is, if eatable, usually consumed on the spot by all present. On special festivities, in addition to invited guests others may invite themselves, and are sure to be welcome. Indeed, it appears that with the Bawenda any festivity proclaims its real value in proportion to the number of guests.

All actions of the Bawenda are based on the principle of equality, though perhaps the Bawenda themselves are unconscious thereof. The whole nation resembles one large family, which will not allow any difference to arise between rich and poor. Even the chief does not allow any of his meanest subjects to pass by him unnoticed; and the least of his graciousness is a friendly greeting or a request for a pinch of snuff, which, however, is never accepted standing.

This consciousness of, or rather the desire for equality, which the Bawenda daily show, and foster

by their own customs and actions, may probably be the reason why they govern themselves and their surroundings in a very indifferent manner. They are hardly able either to accuse, betray, or beat one of their tribe, as far as education or bodily welfare are concerned. For positions of authority in the Church they would be useless, and could never hold leading positions such as the well-known native Bishop Crowther, of the Niger Mission, and others have proved themselves capable of filling. As Government policemen they are feared and avoided even by their own relatives, and towards Whites they behave with a considerable amount of impertinence, and cut highly ridiculous figures by their exhibitions of pompous dignity.

Bawenda Justice

Wherever men enter into relations with each other the soil is prepared for conflicts and excesses which are unavoidable, even with a people of such humble politeness. The causes of their law-suits are mostly women's affairs and old debts; but there are also sanguinary or other conflicts, the root of which did not grow in the beer-pot. Of intentional murders, extensive burglaries, forgeries, and other villainies which come from the grooved tracks of over-civilisation, the Bawenda know, so far, very little or nothing.

The Bawenda hold a high conception of justice; and although they know neither Roman Dutch law nor the Code Napoleon, nor ever study universal comparative law, they have, nevertheless, a strongly developed natural sense of justice and an unwritten law, viz. "the code of sound common-sense"!

The Supreme Court of Justice in Bawendaland consists of the chief of the country and his magnates or dignitaries, whereas the lower courts in the provinces are conducted by the sub-chiefs. The village elders also hold sittings in a limited sphere. But to many people the personality of the judge or the instance of the court is a matter of indifference as long as they have occasion in a given case to talk about their affairs. The chief's court is usually conducted in the large Council Hall; but any other place that offers sufficient room and convenience may be chosen. Frequently this judge

opens a sitting when on a journey he is informed of some affair the speedy settlement of which appears to him desirable. Whether the number of the audience is small or large is of no account, but a large audience is considered to be of advantage, as the publicity of the proceedings may serve to prevent the judge making involuntary mistakes. Any member of the audience who is not a party to the action under hearing has the right at any time during the sitting to raise an objection. Hearings *in camera* are not known, and there are hardly any sensitive persons to be found amongst these blacks, who would feel hurt in any way by shame, or their honour being doubted. Law costs are not heavy, amounting in big suits to £1, which the plaintiff pays to the chief in order "to get a hearing," as the saying goes. The winning party pays him, perhaps, later on, the same amount from gratitude; or has to pay a little percentage out of the goods which are adjudged to him. This he pays in order "to close the door of the action." Payments to witnesses and messengers are unknown, as everybody brings his witnesses along with him, or sends children or others to fetch them. Lawyers' fees are likewise unknown in the Legal Courts of the land.

The Bawenda are fortunate not to need advocates; for every man, woman, or child is his own advocate. All possess great rhetorical gifts, and can make long and eloquent speeches on the most unimportant topics. They possess simply astonishing memories; nothing upsets their countenance, nor are they embarrassed if they fail. They

plead their case with assurance and speak with great skill, emphasising their remarks with many gesticulations, although they have never read Quintilian nor Cicero. They never use note-books, and their eloquence is in no way influenced by time nor place; so they need no one to second them. As perfection in any profession always begins at the base, they might, if properly schooled, easily attain great things in the art of speaking. Every one has the right to defend himself to the fullest extent. Frequently a case is quickly finished, but sometimes it takes a whole day and may be adjourned if necessary. The presiding judge seldom misses a word, and after days have passed he is often able to repeat nearly verbatim any speech made or evidence given, or to sum up the case in such full manner as he considers necessary.

These court scenes are most interesting. The parties have arrived, and plaintiff, defendant, witnesses, and audience are sitting together. They take snuff with one another, and reply to the salutes of new-comers by politely bowing in the fashion already described. Some are watching the sun anxiously, and consider the opening to be rather too long delayed, which may mean a rather late finish. There is no regular hour for the hearing, and no fines are imposed on late-comers. Ultimately the chief interrupts the general conversation, and after a few introductory remarks allows the plaintiff to open his case. Every speech is begun and ended with the bowing already mentioned, which is returned by the whole

assembly. The defendant then replies. Beginning in a somewhat subdued strain he gradually grows more confident and speaks with great deliberation. Hº must not be interrupted during his speech, not even when he tries to irritate the adversary, and attempt to entice him to contradict himself. He often introduces facts into his speech which apparently have nothing to do with the case; goes far back into the past, and opens all the gates of his eloquence, without, however, provoking the impatience of his audience. Some may perhaps show some disquiet as if painfully awaiting the end of the speech. Others affect to be not in the least interested in the matter, and glance indolently at the audience, without however allowing a single word to escape their ears. They are fully alive to the argument. The speaker usually closes his speech with the words, "Now I have finished."

Frequently when evidence is being taken from witnesses there are lively scenes, especially when interjections from the audience cause laughter. But there is always endeavour to maintain order. Women, and children of any age, give evidence if necessary, and talk freely like the men without fear or embarrassment. Danger of perjury is non-existent, for nobody takes an oath. The Bawenda are, by the way, exceptionally honest in this regard. Bribing a judge is very rare, as there are equal rights for all; and any offence in this direction might meet with a public rebuke on the spot. There is no jury necessary. It only remains for the chief or the judge to pronounce sentence or

acquittal, or to determine the award if the action be one of civil process. As already mentioned, the women, on account of their having been acquired by purchase, are often the subjects of many differences. There are, in consequence, some very complicated family laws.

THE BAWENDA CHIEF RAMPUTA WITH HIS TWO INDUNAS.

OLD MEN OF NAPARAMA AT TENGWE.
(New Copper Fields in Northern Bawendaland.)

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Mothers-in-Law and Sons-in-Law

A family blessed with many children, especially if there are many daughters, is held to mean luck and prosperity for the house. The daughters are sold for cattle, and the father buys therewith wives for his sons. If he has already provided a wife for each of his sons he may buy a second or third wife for himself if he has not already inherited other women. If a father, however, has only sons, instead of daughters whom he can sell for cattle, he is consequently unable to expend any cattle on his sons. In that case his brother must help to provide wives for the sons. By such help the brother acquires a claim on that family or its heirs, and he will certainly get his expenditure returned to him in some way later on. The Bawenda sons-in-law are frequently much to be pitied when they have to buy a wife, for the reason that they have to pay for her during the whole of their life, and can never definitely conclude such purchase. The price of a girl varies from 8 to 15 head of cattle, according to the beauty and the origin of the girl. The lowest subject may acquire a chief's daughter provided he is in a position to pay whatever purchase price may be assessed.

If a man has acquired a wife and paid the purchase price, he is required on the third day after the wedding to make a payment of 10s., this being the official announcement to the parents-in-

law of the cohabitation of the newly-married couple. Then, perhaps, the time arrives for ploughing the fields, when every black man sows his land. During this season the new son-in-law becomes the most faithful servant and the first of all his father-in-law's labourers; not only serving him, though he may neglect his own work, but also paying the other labourers with a goat, which is killed and consumed after the work is over. Should the father-in-law consider certain repairs to his house, or new construction, necessary, they are gratuitously done by his son-in-law. The son-in-law is also the best messenger and a constant companion of his father-in-law, for whom of late years he has habitually paid the Government tax, amounting together with his own to £4 sterling.

The mother-in-law plays an even more important part. Notwithstanding that she has already received presents from the son-in-law during the engagement of the young couple, she continues to receive them. She is, however, so "near" that she does not grant her son-in-law the pleasure of eating with her from the same dish, nor of taking any meal in the same room with her. When he visits her he receives his meal on a separate dish, and may consume it apart, in some remote corner. She also rules her daughter, and intervenes in the most intimate relations between the two young people without the husband being able to prevent it; and she must always remain the "dear mother-in-law." If, for example, she has just recovered from an illness and exhibits a special appetite for meat, the son-in-law has,

perforce, to satisfy this penchant. The hint is quietly given by the despatch of some one to him with a full description of her illness. This suffices, and he quickly provides the desired sheep or goat, either buying or borrowing it. He thereafter personally presents it to his dear mother-in-law with a speech as voluble as it is polite.

As the blacks usually sleep at night in their huts near the fire, little accidents are of frequent occurrence. For instance, the blanket is damaged by a piece of burning charcoal. Should such an accident happen to a mother-in-law, the dutiful son-in-law comes forward and mends the hole in the old blanket by providing a new one, which usually costs 10s.

All these payments, and many more too numerous to mention, are, however, of no avail to give the husband any greater authority over his wife. He must in addition be very nice to her, otherwise she does not cook his meals, or on the smallest quarrel or difference of opinion she goes back to her mother. In the latter case there is nothing left to the husband but later to go to his mother-in-law, leading a goat and craving for peace. The mother then recommends her daughter to return to her husband. Some mothers induce their daughters to leave their husbands from time to time, thereby securing a source of revenue for themselves.

Although slavery has for long been abandoned in the Transvaal it still exists among the blacks, and is called "Puli." Thus, many a mother-in-law is not the natural mother of the woman whose husband renders her these services and expressions

of respect. Whole families of blacks are often bondsmen of others, and many a mother must, without being able to prevent it, see her daughter taken away from her and sold to some entire stranger.

Photo by Leo Weinthal.

A NATIVE IDYLL IN THE SPELONKEN.
"Home, sweet home" in Bawendaland.

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Bawenda Beer-Drinking

An inexhaustible source of general merriment and joy is afforded to the more materially-minded section of the people by the beer, which is prepared and brewed in large pots by the women. The beer is produced from Kaffir corn (Amabele) grown in the fields, and is always made in large quantities, every one being enabled to obtain a supply without effort or considerable expense in order to arrange some festivity. Beer is the national beverage (or national vice) of the whole people, and will remain such as long as the people exist.

It is also appreciated by many Europeans, who often drink it when travelling up-country. As the beer is a beverage of the composition of thick soup it also serves as a food, especially during a famine; a family returning from some beer-revel will rarely cook any meals for the rest of the day.

No festivity of any importance is imaginable without this beer, and not rarely a drinking bout is celebrated without any cause whatever. Hosts and guests sit on the ground around the beer-pots, and a cup-bearer supplies them in turns with cups of the cherished liquid, the effects of which do not fail to appear on the way home, finding expression in songs and merriment. To drink any one's health or propose a toast according to our European customs is unknown, as are also celebrations of national or birthday and other festivities. There is no tax on this beer. In connection with

festivities, everybody who may have been overlooked when the invitations were sent out, and any stranger, may invite himself and is not the less welcome. A host feels only satisfied and in a festive mood when he can share delicacies with others, and every one is welcome to enjoy without stint as much as he can assimilate. Beer-drinkings are of daily occurrence with the chiefs (who are presented with the beer by their subjects as a tribute to their dignity). The women bring the beer in pots—and often very large pots—which they carry on their heads from near and far. Friends also present one another with beer; and the sending of the national beverage is always considered to be a mark of esteem and even Kowtow. Beer is also used as a means of payment, and plays an important part during the sowing season. As the people like company, they plough and sow their fields in groups, finishing their work usually in about one day. Every one is specially invited to take part in this common work, and with merry jest and chatter the labour quickly proceeds. For the amusement of the labourers, who toil in a long row under the blazing sun, one of their number now and again runs a little distance forward and performs some weird dance, which is mainly remarkable for its frantic raving and feigned ferocity. Work is, however, in no way interrupted or affected by this. Soon another follows up this performance with a second dance, and so on until work is over. In the meantime, however, the beer-pots, standing in the shade of some tree, are by no means forgotten, and ever and anon are emptied and refilled. Here

also guests may take part in the drinking though they do no work in exchange. Frequently, owing to excessive potations, there arise quarrels in connection with the work. These are frequently settled before the judge. Many fields are also ploughed, donkeys being employed for drawing the ploughs. For the credit of these blacks I must, however, state that during the long years of my stay among them I have never seen any one actually incapacitated by drunkenness. I have often had to rebuff troublesome and importunate Bawenda, who, in consequence of excessive beer-drinking, desired to become over-familiar. I have also seen them while "elated" pass along steep and narrow mountain paths without losing their equilibrium. The effect of the beer is mostly to excite hilarity; it very seldom fans evil passions; so that the beer-drinker is not very dangerous to his neighbours, and need not be feared by his fellows. No one speaks with contempt of an inebriate, but says, in more polite parlance, "He has fallen into the well." If I were to call beer-drinking "the national vice" I should commit a slight extravagance of phrase. It would be more correct to call it permanent gluttony. Intemperance is regrettably defended. Many Bawenda waste their whole life-time and paralyse their energy by excessive beer-drinking. It makes them lazy, and does not allow their sleeping gifts and mental forces to develop. The ultimate consequence must be physical and moral decay of some of the people. Already such decay is visible in the increasing indifference towards everything good and beautiful. Villages

formerly so pretty, now frequently resemble ruins, and nobody tries to repair them. Curiosities of every description, which were often bought by Europeans, are hardly any longer manufactured; and even the sitting-mats for the guests, formerly plentiful in every village, decrease in number; and some blacks have already come to sleep on the bare ground, as they do not possess any blanket. The work in the fields is neglected, and industry and trading with native products are constantly decreasing.

There are, on the other hand, those who practise the art of moderation, and thus avoid the growth of sloth or animal-like torpor. These Bawenda prosper, and become useful members of the population.

The Predominance of Superstition

That superstition should still rule supreme amongst African peoples will surprise nobody. Superstition exists still in Europe despite civilisation and culture. African superstition, however, causes much damage and forms an obstacle to the spiritual development of whole peoples. Let me instance a few examples. One afternoon the big flag-staff erected in front of our house, and used for hoisting the English and German flags on festival and birth days, was struck by lightning. The thick mast was instantly reduced to matchwood, and all the inhabitants were terrified by the thunder. Immediately on its becoming known in the surrounding country that the flag-staff had been struck, many blacks flocked to the scene in order to gratify their curiosity, but partly also to express their sympathy. They all gave vent to the opinion that "the eggs which the lightning bird had laid in that spot should be dug out and destroyed before they could be hatched and do more mischief"! Further, they considered it important to lay "medicine" on and around the spot in order to prevent the lightning from returning.

The Bawenda hold the superstitious belief that the lightning is produced by some evil being who has the power to change himself into a lightning bird, and, as such, to do any damage to whomsoever he chooses. Having finished his evil work he re-changes, they say, into his ordinary form, by washing himself in a pond. Formerly many a

"lightning bird" is said to have been caught and condemned when re-changing. As a lightning conductor, therefore, a red feather—presumably from the wings of the lightning bird—is used, and every more important chief is credited with possessing one of these feathers. On a danger approaching, the owner of such a feather goes to the entrance of the village, raising the feather towards all directions of the compass in order to ward off the approaching storm.

An old witch-doctor of my acquaintance once came to my neighbour, who for a long time was said to be in possession of a lightning bird's feather, which the witch-doctor wanted to buy. All contradictions and all explanations were unavailing. The witch-doctor retired, convinced that my neighbour was withholding the feather from him of deliberate and malign intent. In a certain year the plague of mice had grown to such an extent as to cause anxiety, the more so as the heavy rains had caused weeds to grow in such quantities that the people were unable to till their fields. The chief Shewasse had already given orders to the Knobneuzen—a tribe living in his dominions and credited with having power over the mice—to stop up the holes whence they had "made the mice come out," and thus to check the plague. Suddenly a report spread that an old Knobneuse woman without any clothes had been found in the bush one morning, just outside a village. When asked what she was doing there, she stated that she was tired and exhausted, for she had come, she added, from a battle of spirits which had taken

A MAGWAMBA (KNOBNEUZEN) KRAAL IN BAWENDALAND.

MAGWAMBA (KNOBNEUZEN) WOMEN, BAWENDALAND.

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place during the night, and she had been unable to reach her home. She said, further, that her people and the missionaries had held a meeting and dictated the plague to one another, which, however, had been without result. Everything that is abnormal is always taken as the truth by any superstitious people, and so it happened in this instance. It caused a tremendous sensation, and there remained nothing for it but the chief must call a great meeting, which was to examine the story and determine the matter. I also received an invitation to attend. After a lengthy discussion I received permission to speak. I pointed out to them the absurdity of their doings, showing by examples that the Lord Himself sometimes visited upon people plagues of this kind in order to make them conscious of their sins and to rouse them from their apathy. My speech met with universal approval and was also supported by speeches of others. Ultimately, however, a speaker made his appearance who seemed to believe that he had hit the right spot when he asked the assembly to think of how to get rid of the plague. In his opinion, he urged, an assembly of such importance ought to be able to speak a commanding word of power, the effectiveness whereof should not remain in doubt. This became the word of deliverance; and thoroughly confident of success, the meeting by repeating the mighty word three times ordered all mice and weeds to perish; but without avail.

Knobneuzen Superstition

On my travels my way often led me through a certain village of the Knobneuzen which distinguished itself particularly by its fine round houses and its cleanliness. The men of the village I often met of an evening, sitting in a circle and occupied with some work or other, in friendly conversation. Both they and their surroundings offered a picture of external peace and contentment.

But for some time this place has been evacuated and is now desolate. The only signs of life are the birds chirping in the trees. The reason? Sheer superstition. The death of a single child terrified and drove away the whole population. They had, as others do, sprinkled the entrances of the village with medicine in order to protect themselves from all evil; but without avail. Now they have tried another place, where, perhaps, they hope better to succeed in keeping death from their doors.

Close to my dwelling there lived a woman, with her three children, who followed agriculture. She lived with her mother; but her husband, who at one time bought her for cattle, lived far away from her. In vain he has endeavoured to persuade her to return to his house, where they lived in peace till superstition divided them. I may explain that the birth of twins is considered by the Bawenda a great misfortune and punishment. Now this man's family were, unfortunately, punished by the birth of twins. After examination by the witch-doctor it

was stated that the man's own wife had by witchcraft caused the birth of the twins, and consequently she became the object of hatred and persecution by all the family. She was manacled and tortured by her husband's relatives, who tried to rid themselves of her by plunging her into boiling water. But this proved too much for the husband, who by appealing to Christian relatives living near by, succeeded in rescuing her from an untimely death. But ever since, this woman has been living with her mother, and has no inclination to return to her husband and his relatives. Thus does superstition destroy the happiest of families.

One day I asked the sister of one of my workmen, who with her child was living with her brother, how her husband had died; as I had heard that he had been poisoned some years ago. She explained the whole affair, mentioning that the poison, which had been forced into the man's mouth, immediately took effect. I asked her why she had not called or asked other people for help. Whereupon she replied: "What could I do, and what was I to do, as the gods had ordained it thus?"

Even a good marksman suffers on account of superstition, which grudges him his due praise. These people believe in the existence of a certain medicine which, if it only touches the sun-barrel, has the power to direct the bullet so that it reaches its aim by itself and cannot miss.

If a Bawenda traveller does not want the sun to go down too quickly, fearing that he may not reach his destination before sunset, he retards the sun, as he thinks, by putting stones on the branches of

some tree at the roadside. He is firmly persuaded that he can thus delay the progress of the sun.

The old chief of the Tengoe country once sent to me for the medicine which, if only brought into contact with a diseased tooth, is believed to cause it to jump out of the mouth of its own motion and without pain. In spite of my assurance that I neither knew such medicine nor possessed it, he sent again for it, adding this time, "Why do you fight me, and why have you become my enemy, that you withhold that medicine from me?"

Superstition in many cases monopolises all thoughts, words, and works, from morning till night, and keeps the Bawenda in constant fear.

"The Tyrant, Custom"

Custom is amongst the blacks a power which rules severely and is implicitly obeyed. Everybody bends thereto, and observance thereof is expected from everybody regardless of his position. Bawenda customs as observed, not where the blacks live amongst the civilised whites, but rather in their tribal environment, are varied and impressive. Take a visitor's experience on arrival at a kraal. He is at once and most politely relieved of walking-stick and baggage. A mat is spread out for his use only. Should it be too large it is rolled up, and the guest only has the privilege of sitting on it. The motto is: "Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest." Farewells are equally friendly. The guest is accompanied for some little distance on his way, and with a last friendly pinch of snuff is bidden Godspeed, or its Kaffir equivalent. On more important occasions, such as the reception of special guests, a Bawenda invariably employs a mediator, to whom he first unburdens his mind. This mediator is ordinarily a man specially selected for his office, but in case of his absence, anybody else may take his place. During negotiations the mediator plays his part. Speech and answer are transmitted through his person, though all sit together in the same room. By this means the matter in hand is often drawn to considerable length of time; but for the Bawenda the proverb "Time is money" does not exist.

On a meal being served, all who do not partake of it withdraw in order to allow the rest to take the meal in peace. Further, at the beginning and at the end of the meal every one receives water to wash his hands, though there is no towel, the use of which is still unknown. Neither have knives and forks as yet been introduced; and the Bawenda use their fingers when eating without being in any way embarrassed.

When some dignitary with his suite pays an unexpected visit such as would tax the means of the host too severely, his fellow-citizens or his subordinates in the village usually lend him their support. Very rarely does it happen that somebody tries deliberately to damage his neighbour's work, as in Europe, where evil-doers indulge in incendiarism or damage trees. The Bawenda return any articles they may have found to their lawful owners without seeking any reward. Usually they leave their tools and implements in the fields during seed-time; and nobody would think of stealing them, even though he might like to exchange his old used-up pickaxe for a better one.

And if Heraclides the Greek did say of his countrymen's calves that they would grow better if the neighbour were not a knave, this does not in any way apply to the Bawenda, as they leave their neighbour's cattle in peace.

Great importance is accorded to the maintenance of established customs, and there are special schools called "Tondo" for this purpose. Nearly every larger kraal possesses one of these schools,

which usually are both internally and externally very primitive structures, and mostly situated at the entrance to the village or kraal, and at the same time serving as guard-houses. A meandering road, protected by sticks erected on both sides, leads into the school; and all the youths of the village on attaining a certain age are invited to enter, and are sometimes brought in by main force. As the Tondo lessons take place in the evening, and often extend far into the night, the Tondo is also the sleeping-room of the pupils, who during the day follow their own occupations.

In the Tondo the youths are taught the wisdom of life. They are introduced into all mysteries, and are taught religious beliefs of their people. In a word, they are educated according to the right Bawenda creed. Incompetent and officious people, no matter who they may be, are not allowed to enter the Tondo. The youths during this time form a special caste, and try to perform what they are theoretically taught by their masters. They receive many instructions for their future life, which are connected with the rankest superstition. These they faithfully observe during the rest of their lives; for noncompliance therewith will bring them, as they fear, death or life-long illness.

This school also serves for physical training. The body is rendered less susceptible to pain by frequent whipping with birches. It is further hardened against cold by constant bathing in the rivers at night—especially during the winter.

In order to practise their natural astuteness the Bawenda will execute any number of rather

adventurous schemes with great audacity, for which they are only punished when caught, no matter how wicked or despicable their pranks may have been. Thus they are sent out to steal from the chief, their own parents, or the whites living close by; and their prey is then consumed in common in the Tondo. With some Bawenda circumcision takes place, but this is not a real or original Bawenda custom, but has come to them from other tribes. The passing out or graduation from this school means with them the same as the donning of the "toga virilis" did among the ancient Romans. The education of the girls is equally noteworthy. If a girl attains a certain age she must, in order to harden her body, daily sit for one hour in the morning and at night in the river, for a whole week; the older girls, her teachers, meanwhile warming themselves at a fire which is lit on the bank. In the meantime the girl is subjected to hard whipping by her older companions, when, of course, any of her enemies may indulge in punishing her to their heart's content without her being able to resist or escape. During this period the girls have to perform a series of physical exercises, which are to prepare them for their future tasks as wives and mothers, and are also given instructions for their future life.

An abuse of the worst kind is the murder of twins. Numerous twins are yearly murdered by old women, and their bodies having been packed into pots are buried on the swampy river-bank. Twins are frequently born by the Bawenda women. The reason for their murder is the purely super-

stitious fear that they will bring misfortune upon the family. The mother of one of my best labourers paid him a visit one day and was suddenly delivered of twins. She was very earnestly admonished, and requested to leave the children alive, as she need not fear any misfortune. One day one of her other children became ill, and from fear she strangled one of her twins during the night without leaving any trace of her nefarious deed. The sick child soon grew better; but once more, from fear that it might become ill again or even die, the woman murdered the second of the twins during another night. This time there could be no doubt, as the child's throat showed distinct marks of strangulation.

There could, of course, be no question of her remaining with me. But unfortunately the laws of a white Government had not penetrated so far that this case could be taken up by the courts; and even now it is urgently necessary that the people should be forbidden by Government to continue this abuse; and in case they do not abstain they should be prosecuted more energetically than hitherto. Unfortunately there is no Spelonken Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, to forbid the catching of birds, and punish the robbing of nests containing little birds. Frequently the Bawenda catch chickens, pluck them while they are still alive, and kill them when they are plucked; this being easier, as they say, than plucking dead birds. Frequently such partly or wholly plucked chickens escape from their tormentors and try to find shelter amongst the other chickens.

According to Bawenda opinion, one must pull

a goat's tail off before killing the animal, in order to make the meat more tasty and delicate for the guest. There are many other disgusting cruelties which characterise a people devoid of humane feeling, or of Government instruction and supervision, which is also much needed in this direction.

Bawenda mothers subject their babies to great torture. This is one of the reasons of the great mortality amongst their children and of their frequent chest diseases. Every mother in order to make her child fat and strong feeds it, in addition to the regular meals of mother's milk, with a specially prepared mealie-pap, with which the child is stuffed to excess, and its belly begins to swell. This pap is introduced into the child by a very painful process, the child's nose being closed and his mouth filled with the pap, each breath being used for stuffing more pap into the little body. Frequently a child is suffocated in the process. Being prevented from screaming, the poor little thing wriggles and squirms with pain until it is absolutely exhausted. It should be easy for the Government, by threatening punishment for this abuse, to make an end of it.

The Bawenda are, like all other African natives, accomplished natural liars. They will make statements with the greatest calmness about things which they have never seen and which do not exist at all. Sometimes they even lie to their own dead, by pouring on their graves water instead of beer, as the custom demands—the water being mixed with some colour which makes it appear similar to beer. They have great imaginative

THE MAGATO WAR IN 1898.

The Victorious Boer Commandoes in the late Chief's Stronghold.

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powers and are past-masters in the art of exaggeration. When giving an account of some occurrence they like to indulge in elaborate descriptions; but, on the other hand, they are apt casuists, and well understand the value of reticence. For instance, in the earliest days of the Mpefo War, General Joubert's peaceful intentions had failed, and a Bawenda attack on the Boer horses proved merely to be a demonstration. Whilst the general, in order to frighten the natives and to teach them respect, let his guns fire occasionally, he made all his preparations for war—as it took a full month until the arrival of the Boer commandoes from the South. In the meantime, the most fantastic rumours were circulated amongst the rebel tribes. General Joubert, they said, had been surprised by Mpefo on the Doorn River, and all his men had been killed. The guns had been taken by Mpefo to the mountain, and the head of General Joubert had been fixed on a long pole as a trophy, and was exhibited for everybody's view at the entrance of Ratombo's kraal.

As during these four weeks of preparation for war I lived with the blacks, and was more like a prisoner and absolutely isolated from the outer world, I was naturally desirous to know the full truth. So at last I resorted to irony, and asked the natives what Oom Paul had said at Pretoria when he heard of this terrible defeat. They had their answer ready, and replied, Oom Paul would take it quietly, as already, on the general's departure from Pretoria, he had said: "Try your best, and should Mpefo prove too strong that does not matter.

I shall give Mpefo my daughter for a wife, and we will then be friends again"!!

Should a horse or mule belonging to a European steal unobserved into a field, and the owner of the field notice it in time to prevent any damage, the black nevertheless goes to the owner of the animal and complains about the alleged damage. To emphasise his statement he perhaps draws his hand across his lips, meaning to convey thereby that everything had been eaten up. If the white man should desire to see the damage for himself, he will generally find that there is no damage at all. But the natives know well that they are great liars, and are told so by their own proverbs. Consequently they listen to the most fantastic news with the utmost tranquillity and composure, and only try to find out the truth by gradual stages.

Travels and Hospitality

As civilisation penetrates a country, the faster do rough phases of travelling disappear. In the Transvaal the clumsy ox-waggon, which made but slow progress on its unwieldy wheels, once played a predominant part. It represented the old good days of prosperity, and offered sleeping and living accommodation to the traveller, besides many other comforts. There was even a kind of poetic charm in travelling by this method; for in consequence of the slow progress, the ceaselessly working human brain had plenty of opportunity for reflections. Here we passed a flock of bleating, staring sheep; there noted a herd of cows grazing on fresh green veld. Now the eye enjoyed the sight of beautiful wild flowers; everywhere nature gave food for thought, even if it was only a spider and a big ant running across the road. Everybody travelled as in days of yore did the ancient Germans, of whom Tacitus says that they "loved the forest and the fields, and always settled near a spring."

The great travelling machine of the bullock-waggon had to yield to the sinister and mighty powers of the rinderpest; but very pleasant days will be recalled to many who remember with a smile the clever oxen, who not only bore the names of foreign countries but also of the most famous and notorious parliamentarians, Boer and British alike.

In Bawendaland railways are to-day still unknown. Its numerous rivers have no bridges, making travelling rather difficult. One long road runs along the plain close to the foot of the mountains, and is at present looked after by the Government. Formerly this road was regarded as a private road by the few whites in the country, who, as pioneers, constructed and constantly improved and repaired it.

From this main road the numerous native footpaths diverge to the different villages. Indeed, in the course of time they have practically formed themselves. They lead through otherwise impenetrable undergrowth, and often the thorny bush leaves terrible traces on the travellers' skin and clothes. The rivers and streams in the valleys are frequently very difficult to cross; and the dew, which, however, develops at night only and under a cloudless sky, and soaks the traveller to the skin, is the cause of much malaria, rheumatism, and other illnesses.

The black African does not believe in fostering civilisation by making roads. He personally does not know any difficulties in travelling, as he only thinks of his own person, and is able to wriggle through anywhere, even on the most difficult "monkey paths." In his own village he rarely troubles about having decent roads, and the paths leading to the springs are so narrow that the women who fetch water early in the morning are very frequently drenched by the dew from the overhanging branches and thick undergrowth, which is certainly one reason for their frequent illnesses.

The communications between two villages are often so unrecognisable that were it not for the goats' traces a white man would be unable to find them at all.

The Bawenda does not trouble about making a roundabout course, and does not in the least care about already existing roads. If it suits him any day to lay out a new field, he will plough the soil right across any road that may be there for the use of the general public, and he will not be called upon to pay any fine. And the traveller may then look out for the other end of the road, which is interrupted by the newly tilled and often very extensive field.

In all his doings the black African is really governed by certain motives which he always considers correct and by which he always pursues his object. When he is dealing with whites, who are unacquainted with the conditions of the country, he mostly gains his end and is profoundly satisfied thereat. Not only is it the custom of the Bawenda to build their villages in the bush in order to render them invisible to strangers — so that many a traveller passes by them without the least idea of their existence; but as the wide plains of the Limpopo district are only sparsely populated, and offer very considerable difficulties to the European traveller, there being no sign-posts at cross-roads, there is rarely any human being to afford information. It is therefore always advisable for a traveller to take some trustworthy native with him to act as guide in these difficult regions. Here the knowledge of the roads is kept secret by

the natives, and the European traveller is often intentionally misled by them if he asks for information. Thus by reason of the scarcity of water, the presence of lions, and the quickly falling darkness, this may lead to very unpleasant and dangerous consequences when travelling on the Limpopo Flats.

The roads leading to a village frequently disappear suddenly among high grass. The crafty native desires by this means to keep strangers away from his kraals. It is advisable not to leave a kraal which one may have reached in the afternoon unless one is certain to reach another one the same evening; for if the traveller should lose his way in the darkness, it would be absolutely useless for him to shout in order to attract attention and secure a guide. For the Bawenda, educated in superstitious fear, will only assume evil spirits to be at large on the roads during the night, and therefore do not dare to leave their huts.

The best rule for travellers in this country is to observe absolute tranquillity, and to remember that the utmost patience is needed in order to surmount all difficulties, as an unlucky fate may often bring about situations defying all ordinary precautions or seemingly wise calculations. Such was proved once to Captain Schiel[1] and myself when we left the headquarters of the old chief Pafuri late one evening. The guide suddenly left us in the middle of an extensive maize-field, as my companion had bothered him too much with questions and doubts as to the correct road. The

[1] Formerly Transvaal Superintendent of Native Affairs in the Spelonken.

man became nervous and ran home, leaving us alone in the darkness, to our great discomfort.

Accidents at night are also the reverse of rare, as often the roads lead through evacuated kraals which on both sides are surrounded by open maize store-holes, into which one may fall unawares. Further, here and there old elephant-holes are still found which were formerly used as traps for the tuskers. These are covered with thin poles and leaves. Into one of these I once tumbled with my horse, and though I was not very seriously hurt, I had the greatest difficulty in getting out again.

Considerable difficulties were experienced in former times by travellers who were forced at night to ask for admittance to a village or kraal. One fine moonlight night, after wandering about for a long time in the now well-known copper district, we came to a village which we had located by the barking of dogs. Our joy was indescribable, for we were tortured by thirst and had had nothing to eat all day. But we almost had to fight our way in, as the inhabitants of the village were so frightened, owing to the late and unusual hour of the night, that they implored us to leave them in peace and go away. For a long time we made eloquent appeals, giving our names and residence; but only after considerable deliberation would they finally open the barricaded entrance and allow us to enter. Yet travelling in the Spelonken has also its pleasant side, and just as the bee finds honey even in a thistle, so there are many pleasant occurrences when you are on trek.

All round the eye is greeted by interesting

sights, particularly in the beautiful flora or in the busy and industrious insect world. Here is, for instance, a muck-worm rolling his ball along under the greatest difficulties, and tumbling together with it down some precipice. The ear enjoys the manifold songs of the birds, and it is particularly pleasant when you meet a honey-bird, which will lead you by its peculiar cries to a beehive, and, as a rule, only to one full of honey. The bird flies from tree to tree and from branch to branch, from time to time looking back carefully to see if you, whom he regards as his friend, are following, and expecting his reward in the shape of a piece of honey, which the natives usually put on some branch for him. But caution is always necessary, as the bird often leads you to a species of poisonous snake, which ought to be destroyed, or in more deserted parts you may find instead of a beehive a lion sleeping in the thick grass. In these districts you can easily become acquainted with the king of the beasts without any special invitation, as there are still a great number of them about, especially in the Limpopo district.

Many other interesting pictures meet our eyes in the shape of other travellers whom we may encounter *en route*. Sometimes the scene is not merely picturesque but kaleidoscopic. Here comes a native in the blazing African midday sun proudly enveloped in an old heavy winter coat, illustrating the fundamental homœopathic rule in medicine, heat against heat. There, again, are native families removing, and one need not step aside to let waggons or donkey-carts pass. The whole

NATIVE GRAIN HUTS AT TENGWE, BAWENDALAND.

A VIEW ON THE MOTALE RIVER NEAR HICKEY'S CAMP.
(New Northern Copper Fields.)

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family walks along in Indian file, headed by the father, carrying his blanket on a stick across his shoulder. He is followed by the bigger children, and the rear is brought up by "the pack-donkey," *i.e.* the wife. On her back, wrapt in a skin, she carries the youngest baby. On her head is a large round basket, containing the dishes, cooking-pots, etc., which represent the whole property of the family. On top of all may be a straw mat; and in her hand she carries a pumpkin (calabash) bottle with water, from which she gives the children an occasional drink on the road.

The proximity of a village is shown by the larger or smaller herds of cattle, the herdsmen frequently practising their different games or dances, or playing their musical instruments. But this idyll is often disturbed by the fearful inarticulate screams of some old "insangu" (hemp) smoker coming from the interior of the village, whence also, as we approach, are seen little girls fetching water and gathering firewood for the preparation of the meal. At the entrance to the village, underneath a shady tree, sit the elders and notables of the village, who are more or less loafers, and kill time by playing a kind of chess-game, over which they sometimes become very excited, and which is played for hours.

If the evening has arrived and one is obliged to stay overnight in such a village, the inhabitants take this as perfectly natural. If a native thus stays overnight, another offers him room to sleep and supplies him with food; and in case the guest should not have brought his own blanket, the host

shares his own with him. Such hospitality is an ancient custom, and is strictly observed even, for the reason that if the traveller become ill on continuing his journey, the cause of the illness may not be put down as an inadequate reception of the guest, and perhaps lead to the punishment of the host.

Every travelling European is the guest of the elder of the village. The elder chooses for him his best house, and has it cleaned and swept in his presence. If it is cold, burning charcoals are supplied, and the guest is entertained until his meal is prepared. The mealie cake is served on a wooden dish, and the by-meat and vegetables are served on different plates. Then all present leave, wishing the guest a good appetite. One can, however, easily lose one's desire to eat, namely, when the kindly host means to offer his guest a particular treat and puts into the dish some of the native delicacies, such as fat caterpillars, flying ants, grasshoppers, and similar things. But these may be simply left uneaten without offending the host. When the meal is over fresh coals are brought into the hut, a clean straw mat is spread on the ground to serve as bed, with a round piece of wood for a pillow, and then the black housewife retires, wishing the guest a pleasant night. Before, however, she finally closes the door with a blanket, it is usual and quite advisable to ask her the very important question whether there are any vermin in the house, in which case one naturally prefers to sleep outside.

Bawenda Proverbs

From time immemorial the different nations have tried to express great truths in a few words. Nothing, therefore, reflects the peculiarities of a people better than that treasure-trove of worldly wisdom which is usually termed "popular proverbs." The Bawenda have not been backward in this regard, and possess more than 450 typical proverbs, which have been handed down from generation to generation, and are still in existence as matter of tribal tradition. These proverbs are known to everybody, often shorten a long speech, and contribute more to the comprehension of any matter than voluble explanations, which would perhaps not easily be understood and might even lead to misconceptions.

The subject of these proverbs is the Bawenda tribe itself, or examples from the animal world, which is drawn upon for lessons in philosophy. Amongst the animals the dog, tiger, elephant, snake, hyena, sheep, goat, owl, chameleon, antelope, and grasshopper play important parts. The proverbs remind one of *Æsop's Fables*, with this difference, that the latter are most poetical and at the end sum up the moral; whereas the Bawenda speak in clumsy prose, and leave it to everybody to draw his own moral. As the horizon of their knowledge is somewhat limited, and their eyes, in spite of their natural keenness, only look upon the objects surrounding them, it is natural that they

should only think of material subjects, which alone, in their opinion, have any right to exist. At the same time, these materially-minded people show the dominating feature of their character, which is directed only towards these things, and seeks its satisfaction in enjoyment, or, to use another modern expression, "Live and let live."

The following are a number of proverbs from which the reader will see that some correspond exactly to our European proverbs. "If a great one is lame, his subjects limp." "The child that has hurt himself with a chopper leaves the knife alone of his own account." "Many rats do not dig only one hole." "The children of one mother share the head of a grasshopper between them." "A snake which one can see does not bite any man." "As long as one is poor he quickly comes when he is called; but when he has become rich he does not answer to any call." "With the mouth one can cross any full river." "The mouth of a man is bigger than a sounding drum." "Two snakes (two very clever, crafty ones) do not wait before the same hole." "The mouth is the sister of the road." "A man moving salutes his master politely when he leaves his dwelling," *i.e.* he tries to secure for himself permission to return if he should not like the new place. "A bitter fruit comes from a bitter trunk." "Caution comes after receiving a wound in the head." "Things look for each other," *i.e.* one does not find all good at the same place. "A dog that eats another does not grow fat," *i.e.* ill-gotten wealth never prospers. "The heart is the elder brother of man." "A

cock is caught by poison," *i.e.* for a thief one sets a trap. "A great one is beaten at the time of the tze-tze fly," *i.e.* when one drives away such a fly from a great man one may use more force than necessary, thus taking revenge.

The generosity of the great is also dealt with by proverbs, *e.g.* "A great one treads on a snake," *i.e.* he fears nothing. "A great one must have a long heart," *i.e.* he must never become impatient, or quickly get into a rage about the weaknesses of his subordinates. "A great one never follows the road of the lie," *i.e.* he does not listen to stories told against anybody, but everything must come to him in the proper way.

The vanity of girls is also ridiculed in proverbs. There is a beautiful bird, black as coal, with a golden yellow breast and back. Of this bird they say: "Adorn yourselves as much as you like, you girls, this bird will nevertheless surpass you in beauty."

As already mentioned, the Bawenda do not possess any literature, but they have fairy-tales and stories which are handed down from generation to generation. For instance:—

The Elephant and the Crocodile

An elephant once went to the river to drink. Paying no heed to any other animals being about, he was suddenly attacked by a crocodile, which attempted to pull him bodily into the depth of the river. The elephant became very angry at this, seized the crocodile in his trunk, and carried it for miles, depositing it in the middle of the desert. "There,"

he said, "that is your punishment for wanting to kill me. Now you may live here without water and enjoy yourself."

There is also a kind of Till Eulenspiegel, who, however, takes the shape of an animal. His pranks and swindles are told in many little stories which are pleasant to listen to, but go beyond the space available.

During the evening, the people sometimes amuse themselves by giving each other riddles to solve, which unfortunately cannot be translated. But as an example, I will mention, first, a very short one, and then a very long one. "First comes the King and then the subjects," which refers to the moon and the stars. And here is the long one :—

The Father and his Sons

A father once asked his four sons whether they would help him if he should get into danger. "Yes," they answered in unison. The first spoke thus to his father: "I shall become a spy, and my eyes shall accompany you wherever you may go." "That pleases me," said the father. "And I shall become a thief, and help you with my art," said the second son. The third said, "I shall become a huntsman, and by a good shot help you when you are in danger." The fourth wanted to become a sorcerer and also help his father.

They soon had occasion to fulfil their promises. The father was to be suddenly attacked by his enemies. This the spy saw. He hurried to his father, warning him of the approaching danger in time to enable him to escape.

Another time, when the father had already been surrounded, the second son came and stole all the enemies' arms during the night so that they had to abandon their intention.

But the father had a special enemy, who wanted to kill him stealthily during the night. This danger was detected

by the third son, who took his own rifle and shot the enemy dead in time.

But the fourth son had also occasion to help his father. When he one day was taken ill, and death was approaching, the sorcerer cured him by means of his witchcraft, and made him perfectly sound again. And now the question: "Which of the four sons did the most for his father?"

The Bawenda have ideas which remind one of the Bible. For instance, they say: "If thou seest that thy neighbour is merry, be thou merry with him. If thou seest that thy neighbour weepeth, sit thou down near him and weep thou with him." Who is not reminded in this of similar words by the Apostle Paul? This leads us to the religious life of the Bawenda.

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL
ASIATIC SOCIETY

Religion and Rites

There is no nation on this globe, said old Plutarch, which is devoid of religion. This general instinct exists also with the Bawenda, and finds expression in religious forms and observances, although the person of God has with them become a caricature.

They speak of a creator of the world who was a good god, and they call him Kusane. But after creating the world and all that is therein he retired to lazy rest, and allowed everything in the world to go on as it pleased. Later, another god took Kusane's place. His name is Ralovimba, and he is the god of Mashonaland, where he lives in a cavern. Now he also rules the Bawenda people. His presence is sometimes announced by the rustling of the trees when he passes in the forest. Ralovimba is, however, not a good god, and is an enemy of the people, always trying to cause trouble and damage to them. Therefore they prefer him sleeping, as they think that in that condition he does not see anybody, and can consequently do no harm. Important work is therefore always accompanied by the sigh that their god might sleep, so as not to see and grudge the success of the work. When they fail they say, "Our god did not sleep."

Thovele, another god, is the protector of marital happiness. A woman who is in interesting circumstances is therefore expressly called a human being of Thovele. Chiefs who are, so to say, regarded as gods, are also called Thovele; and, finally,

CHIEF MPEFO OF BAWENDALAND.
(Son of Magato.)

CHIEF KAKU AND HIS WIFE.
(Brother of Ramputa.)

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this name serves generally as a salute for everybody.

Further, there are provincial gods, village gods, and sometimes even house gods. In the immediate neighbourhood of the larger kraals of the chiefs there is a so-called sacred forest where the gods dwell, and are not forgotten on special festival occasions. The provincial god of one district is a large snake; in another, the mountain-monkeys take the place of gods. These often come down from their mountain and pay visits to the people in the village, having become very tame, as they must not be killed. As house gods Bawenda use big stones, which they fetch from the river and erect near their hut, or a red flower, which they plant in the surrounding space.

The weapons of their ancestors are also looked on with reverence, and on a long journey they use them as guides. Some of them also carry patron saints hanging from a cord round their necks, or on their legs, mostly consisting of small bones of wild animals. Now and then one also meets with some sacred domestic animal. Thus an old chief's wife once showed me a little calf which was fettered near the hut, saying: "That is my god. With him I arise in the morning, and go to rest in the evening; in the afternoon he is with me in the field and gives me everything I need, so that I do not suffer from want."

On another occasion I was offered a sacred cow, which the owner desired to sell in order to pay his debts. He was very much surprised when I declined to buy the animal, the more so as his

companions laid more and more stress on the fact that it was a god.

The Jewish faith forbids the belief that the souls of the dead bring protection; whereas the Bawenda do not only expect protection from their dead, but fear their influence, as they think they might do them harm. If somebody dies, they say he strays; if the chief dies, they say he has gone into the earth and is hiding.

That the belief in a future life after death exists among the Bawenda is evident from the following occurrence:—One morning I suddenly heard a war-cry. I asked the chief, who happened to be my guest, what this meant. He answered, there were no war-clouds in the sky, and everywhere in the country there was both fine weather and profound peace. On leaving my house we found many armed blacks on the point of killing five lions, which had just raided my neighbour's cattle kraal and had taken refuge in the bush near by. But as no black dared to enter the bush, and the killing of the five lions became a rather lengthy affair, there arrived in the afternoon messengers from the highest chief forbidding them to shoot the lions, and threatening punishment in case of disobedience; for, said the chief, "The lions are no real lions, but dead ancestors who have taken the shape of lions in order to visit their children." Consequently the lions were undisturbed, and, after killing many cows, disappeared after two weeks' stay.

Another story which the Bawenda tell their children illustrates this:—The centipede was once sent by God to mankind with the message that

they would all resurrect after death. But the centipede, which, as is well known, only moves very slowly, lingered on his way for some time underneath a tree, where it found and ate some fine fruit. Meanwhile the chameleon had been sent by the evil god Ralovimba with the message that men would not resurrect after death. When, ultimately, the centipede arrived and delivered his message, people said to him: "You lie; you do not tell us the truth. For the right messenger has been here, and has told us that we shall not resurrect."

In times of distress and war the Bawenda try to protect themselves by witchcraft, and medicine which they lay across the roads in order to make the country strong, so that the enemy cannot enter their land. In the same manner they protect themselves against illnesses, and put a pail with medicine across the entrance of their village, by which they believe they will exclude even death.

Demonology and Medicine

The Bawenda, like all Africans, are a hardy people, and many of them attain great ages. A baby is already hardened after its birth, and is put naked on the hard floor. They do not suffer from insomnia, and until their last day enjoy a healthy sleep; for as soon as they are tired, no beating of a drum nor any other noise disturbs their repose.

They are also vegetarians; for cattle are not their food, but serve as means of payment when they purchase wives. Mostly they eat only the meat of cattle which have become ill or have died. The "Kneipp Cure" is followed by all those who live near a river, and no hot day passes without their taking a bath. Their bodies are entirely free, and not in any way straitened by fashion. Thus they enjoy all the advantages of a hot climate, but in spite of them they are subject to the inexorable laws of nature like all other men, viz. that they grow ill and die.

Every illness is, according to their belief, caused by the ill-will of some man, who in the shape of a cat has entered the house, or, as a snake, ran across the road, or even as an evil spirit found his way unnoticed into the house where he caused the mischief. With such views the young Bawenda are inoculated, and they adhere to them in spite of better instruction. Throughout life

they remain convinced that only the revenge of another man can cause illness or death.

When, not long ago, a rather young chief with his friends on his mule-cart drove into a swollen river, and in consequence of his drunkenness was nearly drowned, a perfectly innocent old man had, after the chief's return to his village, to suffer for it. His property, his wives and children were confiscated, and he himself was banished from the country.

As soon as a person is taken ill his relatives send for the medicine-man, for the reception of whom, according to custom, a goat is slaughtered. The farther away the doctor lives, the greater is, in their opinion, his skill, and the more effective his medicine. His humbug makes the profoundest impression. If a doctor is unable to cure the patient, they say he is overpowered by the illness, and he has then no claim for payment, no matter how much time and labour he may have devoted to the patient. As a rule the doctor does not leave his patient before his health is restored.

There are a great number of doctors in Bawenda-land, each of whom has his special district in which he follows his calling. On the birth of a child, old women act as midwives, and usually they endeavour to obviate difficulties by incense. As soon, however, as the child has been born, a doctor appears who strengthens its vitality. Another doctor is the rain-doctor; again, another heals wounds and strengthens the body. Another, again, predicts fortune or misfortune for undertakings; and, again, another relieves full-blooded people by

bleeding them in different ways—a process that is in great demand with the Bawenda. There are also doctors for lunatics, although there are no asylums yet. Curiously enough, they mostly succeed in curing the many species of lunatics if the illness is not inherited.

Many as are the kinds of arts that the different doctors practise, the native has the profoundest confidence in every one of them. The head of the whole medical fraternity is, however, the witch-doctor and hereditary medicine-man, who has inherited his art from his ancestors and is generally acknowledged as the head. He possesses not only the faculty to guess the illness, but he also tells the patient what sort of life he has led and by what the illness is caused. And therein rests the charm of the witch-doctor's greatness; and his knowledge of the life the patient led is to the latter a guarantee that he has been wise in choosing his doctor as pre-eminently the man to make him well again.

The medicine is kept strictly secret and is only very little or not at all known to the general public. But a doctor may sell his medicine and teach its practice to another, for which he asks no mean price in cattle. His pupil, who has usually already attained a ripe age, always accompanies his master on his professional visits, and may in some cases be sent by him as his representative.

Illnesses are also cured by expelling the evil spirit. For this purpose the doctor performs the maddest and most difficult dances, while the relatives of the patient sing their applause and

ultimately join the mad dance. The doctor himself is, during this cure, exposed to the greatest privations, as he must not take any food until the patient has recovered.

By this hubbub and excitement the patient is instinctively interested and finally joins the dance; his blood is put into stronger circulation, and he either quickly recovers, or sinks into collapse from exhaustion, and dies.

Although these doctors practise so extensively they have not the faintest idea of the human organism. Genuine medical science has passed by this nation for centuries, and in their history there is no trace of any scientific observation of the functions of the human body. All interior pain they attribute to a snake; whereas they describe pains in their limbs by simply mentioning their existence. For instance, if they have a headache, they say, "I have a head"; or toothache, "I have a tooth," and so on. This at first strikes the European as rather absurd, but on consideration he finds that it very naturally and appropriately expresses the feeling. Of the Europeans these natives believe that they have a universal medicine which cures all ailments.

Bleeding is known to them, though they have a different method. For a violent headache a few cuts on the side of the head are sufficient. The doctor then takes a piece of cow-horn and sucks the blood out until he considers the quantity sufficient; whereupon he removes the horn.

A radical cure for flesh wounds, especially for burns, is cow dung, which they put on the wound,

and which is said to have a cooling and healing effect. They also apply different kinds of bandages; and for broken bones they have a kind of wooden splints, which they fit and tie to the broken limb in much the same manner as we do.

In spite of their beautiful white teeth they also suffer from toothache. There are no regular dentists, but there are skilful people who, by means of a sharp iron instrument, drill a hole into the aching tooth and pull it out, during which process the patient is subjected to agony.

If an illness appears to have serious consequences the relatives remove the patient from the house, put him under some shady tree, or build a provisional hut, where they nurse him, lest the house should be contaminated by death. Should a guest be taken ill, his relatives are informed without delay, so that they may come and satisfy themselves that the patient lacks nothing, and that they may nurse him themselves. If, in spite of all precautions, they should have the misfortune to let a patient die inside a house, they abandon the building, pull it down, and erect a new one, or leave the neighbourhood altogether.

If a guest or traveller dies, he must not be buried before it is known whence he came and where he went, and before his relatives can be called. Although they do not think much of the grave, and put the body somewhere into the ground during the night, they go into mourning, cut their hair, cook and eat but little, and wail loudly. On the death of a chief or his wife or mother, the whole country goes into mourning.

Work is suspended for a week, and all personal ornaments and adornments must be removed for that period.

A word about the witch-doctor, who is more feared than respected, and who even astonishes many Europeans, and comes very near to making them believe in supernatural forces.

Witchcraft and Fortune-Telling

When Shakespeare says in *Hamlet* that there are more things in heaven and earth than we dream of in our philosophy, he expresses a great truth. From the most ancient times, many men have been accompanied by secret forces during the whole of their lives long. We hear of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, who by their oracles prophesied good or evil, and led their people to war and victory. The reader must not be surprised if I now speak of witchcraft among the Bawenda, as, even with civilised people, sorcery is more or less practised even to this hour, and has during recent years been legally proceeded against by the authorities.

The witch-doctor is the centre of witchcraft and sorcery in Bawendaland. He is mostly a man, but in isolated cases there have also been female witch-doctors. He lives like the rest of his fellow-men, except that his dwelling is mostly in some out-of-the-way place, and he might draw one's attention to him by his more dignified attitude. He is consulted by everybody as regards any desires, troubles, or sufferings. If a sheep is stolen, he is asked to help in the recovery or the detection of the thief. Has a dead relative buried his treasures? The witch-doctor is asked to help in discovering it. Has a death occurred in a family? He is asked to discover the murderer in order that he

may be brought to justice, or in the case of an incurable illness, to find the poisoner, so that the sick member of the family may be cured! Whatever their troubles may be, the natives always apply for help to the witch-doctor.

If a deputation comes to the witch-doctor in order to consult him about any matter, the members agree upon some object, say a ring, or a snuff-box, which they hide in order to test the doctor. If he mentions the hidden object, and, moreover, tells them their genealogy, whence they come and whither they go, then he is the right man for them, and they abide by his decision, whatever that may be, considering it to be the whole body of truth.

The instruments and medicines which the witch-doctors use in their performances are always different. Frequently they consist of carved tablets of bone ornamented on one side, and often made of ivory; further, they have various little bones from sundry wild and tame animals, which they use like dice, and from the relative positions of which they prophesy fortune or misfortune. Their medicaments consist mostly of some intoxicating powder, which they either eat or snuff, and which in a few minutes transforms a man to such an extent that he is hardly recognisable; and Plato is right when he said that "Fortune-telling is composed with madness."

The majority of Europeans ridicule or condemn this sorcery. A great many consider it devil's work. Others call it delusions and humbug. But there are also superstitious persons who are attracted by it, such as poor Boers who live amongst the

natives. But all these verdicts are based on hearsay, and there is possibly no European who has personally witnessed such performances, although they are always publicly conducted, and never practised in secret. Of course they do not take place on the high-roads, as the witch-doctors always practise their art at their own house.

The author has, however, several times personally witnessed such meetings, and it may prove of interest to describe them. Thus I happened to be one night in a native village where a witch-doctor's ceremony was to take place. The inhabitants, even the children, had settled round a big fire. The task was to find and dig up some hidden article. Every sorcerer has his assistant; and this assistant conducted the proceedings by singing a song which was accompanied by the assembly. During this song the tones of a flute were audible, announcing the approach of the witch-doctor. In consequence of the profound darkness he became visible only when he reached the midst of the assembly. There he squatted and finished the song which his assistant had begun. Thereupon his assistant handed him the necessary quantity of medicine for snuffing. The doctor then went on with his song in a monotonous voice, and suddenly went into well-simulated fits which lasted for a considerable time, during which he had to be supported. By-and-by he came to, and began to praise his successes and wonderful achievements in a song, not forgetting to mention the unbelievers and scorners. Then he made symbolical signs, indicating the direction and the place where the article was to be found.

In order to gain more certainty I visited a sorcerer who lives close to my place and who is famous far and near. I had a special matter on my mind, and desired to see for myself whether he could find it out. There were no singers and no ceremonies. As he regarded my visit as a friendly call, and had a goat brought in order to have it slaughtered for me, I thanked him, remarking that I would prefer his telling me about "the matter that weighed my heart down." These few words were sufficient. He disappeared, but had me called in a few minutes' time. My companions did not believe in the thing, but what was our surprise when the witch-doctor, after having taken some medicine, told us all the facts of the case in every detail and with absolute correctness!

Another time, on the occasion of a journey, we met a sorceress, with whom we intended to have our little joke. My friend gave one of our black men an article to hide in his mouth and told him to feign illness, which the boy did with great skill. But, surprising as it is, "*she*" found us out, and proved that the boy had feigned the illness, and that the article, which she correctly named, had been given to him to put into his mouth.

All these three occurrences go to show, and have convinced me, that there is some force therein. For these people have been working with hypnotism for a long time without themselves knowing where and how they acquired this force. A curious fact is, that even the greatest witch-doctors cannot educate their own children in their art; whereas in the case of a medicine-doctor, all the glory of the father

descends to his son, whom he may introduce into all his secrets.

It is extremely difficult to get any information from the Bawenda, who have a very reserved nature; unless one has had intercourse with them for years, speaks their language, and knows their customs, they do not show him the least confidence. They draw back as soon as he merely hints at this or that question, and behave like tortoises or snails: they retire into their shell as soon as one gets into contact with them. But as I have faithfully stood by them in many a danger in the past, I have grown better acquainted with them, and have ascertained that no sorcerer can practise his art unless he has a medium in the assembly who knows something of the matter and assists him as a kind of thought-reader. If there is no "medium" available they say that they are "overpowered," *i.e.* that they are not able to hypnotise that person. Likewise their efforts are in vain if the "medium" opposes them.

An easy thing it is for the witch-doctor to detect an alleged murderer, called "molai," as the assembly always suspect and hate *one*, and consequently occupy their minds with that one person. But what astonishes the Bawenda most, is that the witch-doctor always finds their suspected criminal, whilst in hunting up stolen and hidden treasure his efforts are frequently unsuccessful, as there may be nobody who knows anything about the matter except the culprit himself, and thus the doctor has nobody to help him to find a clue.

If a witch-doctor has declared that a man is a

"valvi" (murderer), that man has no longer any place wherein he may live in peace. For whenever an accident happens in a village where such valvi lives, he must cut, or take his stick, and wander away. A great many stories are told about the valvi, as I shall call them in future. Some are said to go for rides by night; others, to go shooting with the rifle of a white man; others, again, to wander about by night completely naked. Therefrom I come to the conclusion that these valvi are merely moonstruck lunatics. As the Bawenda generally sleep in the open air, and only use their houses as shelter against rain and wind, it is possible that the moon, which shines even stronger in this country, has this effect, even as it is written in the Bible, "That the moon shall not smite thee at night."

Such branded people have to be very careful in intercourse with their fellow-men; for any indirect remark or threat may often lead to the gravest consequences, as was experienced at a certain Mission station.

Two women were living close to one another, one of them, being a heathen, was branded as "Molai." The two women got to quarrelling over their children, and the "molai" woman remarked, without meaning anything, that "something would happen to the other woman at sunset." The other, a still young woman, was frightened to such an extent that she got a headache, and repeatedly exclaiming "She wants to kill me," she became really ill through excitement. All efforts to calm and console her were of no avail, and the next day she died.

This happened before our eyes, and many similar cases occur in that country without attaining publicity.

Like everything else, this sorcery has its good parts though it may be damnable. The blacks are thereby prevented through fear from committing many thefts and other offences. And the witch-doctor has often succeeded in bringing enmities and quarrels of long standing to a close by proving the object of the quarrel to be innocent.

Under the new rule of the country the sorcerers are considerably hemmed in, and the people are gradually losing their fear of them. They take all kinds of liberties, stealing and receiving being of daily occurrence. And as the Government, which is represented by one person only, is unable to take up all these cases and bring the culprits to justice, these offenders walk about free and unpunished, exercising their nefarious trade to the detriment of the community. Often I have heard the blacks complain that formerly they were at least at liberty to punish offenders, whereas now they are left unpunished and at large.

The repression of the witch-doctors may also be the reason for the increasing number of native people who engage in the habit of playing with dice. Even young fellows carry dice with them and use them, without, however, knowing that there is another force necessary which is not even known to him who possesses it.

NATIVE KRAAL IN BAWENDALAND.
Six miles from Ramputa.

A WELL-KNOWN STORE AT COMMANDO BOOM, SPELONKEN.

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African Philosophy and Physique

The black Africans have their own philosophy, and look at the world, as all other people do, through their own spectacles. In their view there is no room for physics, for they are absolutely indifferent as to whether the world consists of atoms or of fire, and likewise consider philosophical speculation a useless racking of the brain. They only know the philosophy of practical action and shrewd calculations, and they strictly follow Cicero's advice to his son: "Cui bono."

With these people, who still live entirely in primitive nature, the first law is naturally that of self-preservation. Their views of duty and right result from extraordinary personal power of observation and an inborn instinct which they possess in common with the animal world surrounding them. They have the fox's cunning and the wisdom of the snake. These qualities they use in order to secure advantages and make themselves popular and useful.

Thus they leave a back door open in every kraal, which, as mentioned before, is always surrounded by thick undergrowth. This back door, known only to the initiated, serves them as a means of escape in case of persecution. In order to avoid envy and jealousy, they hide and distribute their wealth, particularly their cattle, amongst acquaintances living at a great distance, so that

nobody is able to estimate their riches. They may even oblige a neighbour by looking after his cattle in order to appear poor. So as to protect his person every Bawenda has several names, which, in complications with Europeans, help him to evade and escape persecution. This I know from personal experience. On a journey he invariably gives a stranger, whose intentions he does not know, a wrong name and address, so that on a sudden accident or misdeed happening, no suspicion may be cast on him, whether he be really innocent or actually guilty. He enjoys playing the spy, and has a natural adaptability for this trade. Great chiefs in their own houses are, like European princes, surrounded by spies, who betray their secret conversations, etc., to the enemy. In an uprising against the Europeans or the Government, they wisely send the youths of the tribe into the fray first. Should their scheme succeed they put in an appearance *in corpore*, whereas otherwise they apologise most volubly, profess not to have known anything about the matter, and demand the punishment of the hot-blooded youths, whom they have, however, in the meantime shown the way to escape or to conceal themselves. Thus they know precisely how to meddle in politics and yet extract themselves from tight places, if and when they are to be called to account. The ambassador of a chief must, when on a friendly mission, especially if he has to deliver a petition, understand how to deliver his message in such a way that he shall succeed in gaining his master's object. For if he fails to do so, he is, on his

return, severely thrashed, as one who does not know his work.

Very rarely will a European succeed in finding a culprit from out of the crowd of blacks, as one never accuses or betrays another, but rather helps him to hide himself; and betrayal of a fellow-man is considered nothing less than a crime. If it be a question of preserving their property, caution is with them also the mother of wisdom. Thus a chief sewed up his messenger's own pocket containing a money present for me, and particularly desired me to open the pocket and take the money out with my own hands, so as to ensure safe delivery. In observing, listening, and asking questions a messenger is indefatigable, in order to be able on his return to report much and lie, but with discretion, so as not to cause any trouble by his unrestrained tongue. He also knows perfectly how, at suitable moments, to control his gossiping propensities, and likewise controls his temper admirably, lest he should be tempted to violence when getting angry.

One must never look for strength of character in a Bawenda if he should be used by one white man to find out things about another European. He likes to remain everybody's friend; and in consequence of his gossip and lying he becomes naturally a very dangerous person. Thus natives are not infrequently the cause of ill-feeling and antagonism between Europeans, and as they know how to shear their sheep under such circumstances, by telling each only what he desires to hear, they successfully deceive both parties, and often cause

much trouble. They make also very unsatisfactory witnesses in a court of law, and Europeans should avoid having anything to do with them in this direction. It is not at all unusual for a native witness, when he notices that the case appears to go against the party for whom he is called, to suddenly profess to know nothing whatsoever of the facts, and, perhaps, not to have seen or heard anything. Sometimes he will even make a complete turn over and give evidence against his own client. In this way he causes the greatest harm, for this, if for no other reason—that in case his client should not win the case it might, and occasionally does, lead to trouble for the witness.

Bawenda persons of special talents, artists or witch-doctors, seek no public advertisement. Their own achievements make them famous and popular. In disputes the Bawenda is honest; for as soon as his opinion has been proved to be wrong, he capitulates, saying: "I am overpowered"; and he will not try, as many Europeans would, to assist towards victory by stubborn lying and hair-splitting.

Altogether, the Bawenda remains a great psychological puzzle, only to be explained by his temper, or, rather, his temperament. His natural disposition is the same as that of the country he dwells in—a land which is cruel, and educates her children to cruelty.

By coming more and more under the influence of culture, the black gradually attains his real importance. He is no longer in the state when blind necessity or senseless accident decided his

weal or woe; when generous nature provided for his need, and when he spent his life in laziness. He has, on the contrary, entered an epoch of civilisation by the arrival of culture, and has himself become a product of culture; and as culture has destined him for culture, he must *nolens volens* go hand in hand with it, and help in its development, thereby securing his own well-being.

For the development of Africa the black is a very important factor, as the European needs him, and without him can hardly attain his aims. The black possesses, moreover, the necessary physical strength, staying-power, and hardiness. All his natural advantages help him to employ his physical strength. The hard soles of his feet enable him to walk on the hot and stony, sometimes thorny roads. His tough skin renders his body immune against the sudden changes of the climate. Thorns do not easily hurt him, and his strong neck enables him to carry big burdens for miles; whilst his whole muscular system leaves nothing to be desired. In all domestic and other work he is very apt, and becomes quickly skilful if he is properly taught by the right teacher.

That the natives can work if they choose is confirmed by experience. Any one who has lived with the natives for more than a decade may claim to be entitled to pass this judgment. But many other proofs will confirm this, such as the letters and telegrams in which this or that employer asks his old and trusted servant or labourer to return after having enjoyed a short holiday in his own home, after years of service with his white employer. All

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this goes to show that blacks can, apart from popularity, also acquire great confidence. There are also women and men who are already competing with one another, and, incited by the desire for gain, will work in the blazing sun all day long, only returning from the fields in the dusk. As soon as a black has realised the value of work, he plants his own trees and eats and enjoys his own fruit,—which he was formerly unable to do, in consequence of the unsettled conditions in the country. Then it is that he will gain appreciation from Europeans. At the same time, it is impossible to change in a moment a black people, which for centuries has gone its own ways, into an intelligent nation.

Every native is lazy by nature, and from his early youth has had every inducement to laziness. Even proverbs justify his laziness to a certain degree. Thus: "Work which is done for the Capital only kills the stupid." He has acquired his laziness with his mother's milk, and it has become his second nature. He does not know the struggle for existence, and only knows the sources which provide him with food with little exertion. Unpretentiousness is nearly a virtue with him, and he gets his interest in the increase of his cattle herds and the sale of his daughters. The education of his children does not entail any expense, and anxiety for his old age is unknown to him. Everybody who knows the whole system of social conditions looks on this laziness as quite intelligible. Yet it is not a fatal failing, nor one incurable, but only the disproportion between duty and the

inclination inborn in every man, only in a greater degree with the blacks. He who looks for remedies to cure the laziness of the blacks would have to cut into here and correct there in their social laws; and this fact has hitherto been entirely overlooked by many. Above all, the still existing slavery amongst the natives would have to be abolished; the many beer-drinking orgies limited by the Government; and last, but not least, corporal punishment maintained.

The Transvaal has the advantage of possessing a good school for labourers in the Johannesburg gold mines, where many thousands of blacks find their daily occupation. The taxes, though they may appear somewhat high, are also apt to shake many a native up from his sumptuous and idle life; and if some pressure were brought to bear, many more would come from their comfortable corner to work. Now that the old Boer spirit has been restored to influence, the danger of indolence, which after the war made itself felt amongst the natives, will be repressed, and the sound Boer system will succeed in keeping the blacks in proper bounds, so that they do not play a wrong part, neither by land-purchases nor by being granted the, to them, unintelligible parliamentary votes, as has been the case at the Cape, to the detriment of that Colony.

Intercourse between White and Black

If the intercourse between whites is called an art, for the acquisition whereof means are existent, this applies in a far higher degree to the intercourse between European and Native, which meets with so many natural and important obstacles. This art must be learned, as it is of the highest importance to the many Europeans who have dealings with the natives.

Many a one only looks at the external aspect of the people, and on the first occasion when a stranger enters into relations with them, he is unable to arrive at another verdict than that they are a dirty people. Thus he at once has his prejudices. At night his rest may perhaps be disturbed by the dances and the accompanying rather monotonous music, frequently lasting for hours; and he is anxious to bring his belongings into safety during the night, not knowing that he can sleep there more tranquilly than in European cities. The more remote the place from the civilised parts of the district, the more secure and inviolable become the European's belongings by night as by day, at least in times of peace.

The master-key of all human hearts, no matter of what colour, is, and remains for all times and at all places, Love. Here also Pascal's beautiful sentence remains in force: "One must love the human heart in order to understand it." Love is like a mild sunshine, to which the buds open. All

knowledge of men without love only leads to contempt of men. Others believe they will get acquainted with the blacks by their own wisdom. Whoso desires to get acquainted with us Europeans will not always succeed, for we do not show the best sides of our character to everybody; we do not always show ourselves as we are made. Whoso, however, approaches us with love, to him we disclose our heart, and meet with confidence. How infinitely more difficult then is it in the case of a black whose nature is even more reserved, and who possesses a far larger amount of distrust. It is very difficult to become acquainted with his character unless love, patience, and forbearance assist the endeavourer.

But in addition to love, justice, which sometimes means paternal severity, is required. Every European has the great moral duty to make his educational influence felt, and not only to merely use his labour in the spirit that "the native has performed his duty; the native may now go." In order to educate the native, one must first set him a good example, practise severe discipline against oneself, and always make him feel one's superiority. One who compromises himself can have but scant success in educating natives, and will probably lose their respect and his influence and prestige with them.

Many Europeans follow another recipe. They try to gain the natives' confidence by friendliness; overlook his frequent insolence and intrusions; and finally reap the curious but too common experience, that the greatest kindness is met by the

grossest insolence. And why? Because the natives are of opinion that such Europeans are not quite sound in their minds. This arises from the natives' habituation to caste. They feel that it is unnatural for them to sit in chairs in the company of Europeans, and even more so to be invited to sit down with them at the dinner-table. Whites who expect them to do so will never be respected by the blacks. They may play the humble servant in the white's presence, but behind his back he is laughed at and made fun of by all the natives in the neighbourhood, and ultimately he is systematically lied to and cheated.

In case of transgressions or mistakes, the black has a strongly developed natural sense of justice, as well as a consciousness of guilt. He knows from experience that guilt is always followed by punishment, and therefore he will patiently endure even the severest punishment if he has really deserved it. He is, however, the declared enemy of injustice, and an unjust punishment will incite him to open rebellion. In this he meets with the support and sympathy of all his compatriots, who will hear of it very quickly even though they are without newspapers. They will after this avoid the white man of unjust reputation, and do not offer him their services; and if he should have a business, he is certain to lose all his native customers. So that at the very lowest or even the most sordid estimate, it does not pay to be unjust. No beginner is free from making mistakes. Indeed at first he has to overcome a great many difficulties which are mostly caused by lack of knowledge of the

native language. Therefore every sensible man will at first be very indulgent and patient; keep his temper if anything goes wrong; and not allow his passions to run away with him. Many blacks are at first very clumsy and slow, but in a few days they learn their task and do their duties satisfactorily.

As the conditions in various parts of South Africa are so widely different according to locality, it is difficult to give any prescriptions. To use a metaphor, the black resembles a musical instrument which demands a good player, and fortunate is he who can at any time tune it himself.

The ways and behaviour of the natives towards the European appear at times very strange to the latter. If a native calls to pay a visit, he announces his presence outside the door by coughing. Does he visit his chief, he is frequently kept waiting for a considerable time before he is admitted. Therefore it is *bon ton* and is considered "gentle" if the European does not receive him, and settles his business with him in no particular hurry. He is in no way offended by being kept waiting. The natives never hasten departure, and have not the remotest idea of the many matters that a European has to look after. If one desires to get rid of a black visitor, he either dismisses him without ceremony, or points to the sun, saying, as the natives do, that "he has set," although the sun may still be high in the sky.

The majority of Europeans are given special names by the natives, which correspond either with some feature or quality or occupation which the European followed at the time when they first

made his acquaintance. Thus a corpulent gentleman is usually called by them Ratumbu, which means "Father of the Bellies." One European bought maize, but had not yet a hut to sleep in. He therefore built a tent with the maize bags, and was promptly given the name of "Father of the Bags." The one is called "the peaceful," the other "the quiet," and so forth. A traveller who desires to inquire about a European, or be conducted to him, therefore often meets with difficulties, as the blacks know the Europeans living amongst them only very rarely by their real European names.

A negro always preserves his philosophical tranquillity. With the natives the saying holds good: "As you shout into the forest so it shouts back."

As regards education of the natives, however, it is not everybody who succeeds in always hitting the right target. Many are hampered by ignorance of the language and lack of knowledge of an appropriate proverb to utter at the right moment. Some blacks take advantage of such circumstances, become obtrusive, and not infrequently molest a white, whom they know not to be able to go the long way to the administrator's office to have them punished. A great many things should be deemed indispensable for the welfare of the country. But the Government is unfortunately represented very insufficiently in the Spelonken, and has to watch over the well-being of more than 100,000 souls. More whites ought to live distributed all over the country and co-operate for the punishment of known offenders, who at present get off without any penalty, and,

moreover, laugh at the Government. Many a white is sick of this state of affairs, and is vexed at the vast sums of money which leave the country year by year, when so many suffer and cannot settle pressing matters in consequence of the long distances and too great loss of time.

The African in War

How important it is to know the psychology of the blacks is evident from the fact that it was only after the rebellion had been quelled that the Natal Government alleged that some of the trouble was due to Dinizulu. Any chief who, having been released from prison, receives his subsistence from the Government, is externally a loyal subject. He shows the greatest friendliness and dog-like submission, and can deceive Europeans as well as the Government. As son of his father Cetywayo, Dinizulu could not by any law of the natives be forcibly separated from his countrymen as long as he lived with them in the same country. They bring to him, though in secret, their tribute, be it ever so small. That such a man should not have been intimately acquainted with all occurrences amongst his people is impossible of credence. Thus by his silence he deceived a Government which meant well by him, and kept them in the dark about things which he must have known instinctively.

Like the Bawenda, no doubt, the Zulus and all others in case of a raid on Europeans send their youths in advance. If the raid succeeds, the Zulu elders and authors of the plan put in an appearance. Should things, however, have gone the other way, it is they who, in order to avoid even the appearance of relationship with the raiders, demand their severe punishment and even offer to bring them in, whilst

secretly they give them every assistance to make good their escape, or procure them a safe refuge.

Remarkable it is that Europeans make efforts to clear Dinizulu even before his trial. This is just as curious as the reports which a traveller, E——, published some years ago in Germany, who pretended to know much about Dinizulu, was in his service, and was decorated by him with the "Order of the Crocodile." This Order does not exist even to-day with Dinizulu, but nevertheless it has found mention in *Meyer's Encyclopædia.*

A certain official in the Transvaal who vainly endeavoured to find a murderer, ultimately gave up the search, as the leader of the murderous gang had made an affidavit to the effect that he knew nothing whatever about the matter!

When I returned from my trip to Europe and heard of this, I felt the greatest indignation, the more so as I had been a witness, and the murderer as well as the most minute details of the affair were well-known to everybody in the country. I therefore took the natives to the official, made them give their evidence again, and had the satisfaction of having prevented the blacks from laughing too much at the stupidity of the whites.

The Bawenda do not make wars in the ordinary meaning of the word. They only undertake treacherous raids for purposes of revenge and plunder. Spies find out the ways and the most suitable place for scaling the wall during the night; but the raiding party always keeps a retreat open, and should the enemy happen to get behind them and thus cut them off, they would lose their senses

and everybody would run away, only caring to save his own life. When firing a rifle they keep their eyes tightly shut and are no shots whatever. They could not stand an open battle, but only try to get near the enemy by cunning. In longer wars, ten dead are deemed by them a heavy loss, which discourages them and drives them home.

A war is never finished until the enemy's capital has been destroyed and the chief been killed, or has taken flight from the country; for the conclusion of peace is unknown to the Bawenda. The raids mostly take place in moonlightnights after midnight, when the enemy have grown tired and are in deep sleep. Has a raid succeeded? The victors celebrate their victory on returning; on these occasions the big war-drum is audible throughout the country. Occasionally a killed enemy is taken home by the victors and used as medicine, as they think that tasting his flesh will make them strong and give them advantages. Usually the flesh is mixed with beef. Cowardly as they are, they are also cruel, and often helpless women and children are their only targets; and when their wild nature has been awakened they allow their evil passions to run loose. A specially brave warrior who succeeds in doing some deed of valour, such as murder, receives as a reward a small dignity, such as ruler over some villages, or the chief presents him with a woman.

In consequence of the widespread relationship amongst the people, treachery often spoils the most careful plans of raids. Once, when two chiefs' sons were fighting, and one of them intended to surprise

PROSPECTING SHAFT AT DJEZELELE COPPER MINE.
Fifty miles west of the Messina Co.

THE AUTHOR'S FIRST HOME (SELF-BUILT) ON HIS ARRIVAL IN BAWENDALAND.

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the other at night, the latter was already in waiting for him, and called to him and his men ironically from the top of the village wall to make haste, as he and his men had already waited for them ever so long! The intending raider thereupon beat a hasty retreat, and for many a day remained an object of scorn and derision in the whole country.

Once when there was a state of war in the country, the still free mountain tribes of the Bawenda surprised the peaceful tribes who lived in the plains, who for years had been loyally paying their taxes to the Government. Their villages were all burned down and their property taken away. It was terrible to watch all this without being able to help; to see the smoke rising from the ruined villages in the twilight. Then in the evening, it may have been close to ten o'clock when the terrible scenes once more passed before my mental vision, three armed natives entered, and, imploring the greatest secrecy, told me that a large Bawenda kraal which was under my control was to be raided and all the inhabitants to be murdered that night. If I were in a position to do so I might give them a hint to clear out. The three natives implored me not to mention the affair publicly, as Mpefo, the chief, would have them executed if he learned of their informing me.

But it was impossible to send any messenger to the threatened kraal, as all river fords and all roads had already been cut off by the enemy. Thereupon the three warriors promised to delay the attack until it had become a little lighter, so that my people could see the attack for themselves.

This they really did, as they were the leaders, and they persuaded their men that it was too dark, that in consequence of the darkness and the many people about, some misadventure might happen, and that in the darkness they might shoot their own friends. With these arguments they delayed the attack so that my people could fly, although they had to leave their property behind them, and their fine village was burned to the ground.

Later on, we ourselves were warned of a great danger when these same natives, incited by unscrupulous white intriguers, had already assassinated my neighbours, and at Mpefo's desire were going to put a sudden end to *our* lives. had chosen a Sunday morning for their dee Mpefo had prepared everything to let us disa being, as we were, undesirable witnesses many evil deeds. He feared that we might dangerous to him, as he had just succeeded in smuggled into Mashonaland with some cattle, by white men, and desired again to settle amongst the English in the Transvaal in spite of the Boers pursuing him; in which intention he has now succeeded.

At that time the chief Lamondo, who once before was led astray by Mpefo and put into prison by General Joubert, but was later on released in consequence of my request to the Executive Council, gave me a hint of what was to happen. The day before he sent his two old uncles to me, informing me secretly of Mpefo's intention. By a happy circumstance, two old white friends of mine appeared and took us away to Spelonken in their cart, releasing us from a very dangerous situation.

I mention this friendly act of Lamondo's only in order to show that gratitude induced him to repay his debt with an act that is entirely isolated; for during the long years of my stay amongst the blacks, I have seen little or nothing in the way of gratitude amongst them, and even in this instance I have my doubts as to whether this act was really an expression of gratitude, and not a shrewd speculation. For in case the affair should have gone wrong or have had unpleasant consequences, he would have been able to protect himself by pointing out that he had informed me, but that I had not understood his message!

General Joubert, Magato and the Mpefo War

Of all the native tribes in the Transvaal, the Bawenda people has longest resisted Boer rule. A great many years ago the Boers came into contact with the Bawenda, but were one night attacked by them and had their settlement, Schoemansdel, burned down and destroyed. Shortly before the last war with Great Britain, however, the Boers succeeded in conquering the Bawenda, but they were not able to enjoy the rich revenue accruing from the country. This was left to the British to enjoy and utilise.

In order to bring the inhabitants of the more northern districts into closer contact with the Government, General Joubert had appointed Captain Schiel, a very energetic man, as native commissioner, but had instructed him not to provoke trouble, and to deal tactfully with the native population.

The Boer Government forbore to take arms against the natives, through no fear of consequences, but because they had always important plans and schemes in other places which required prior attention.

Magato, the greatest of all the Bawenda chiefs, the "Lion of the North" as he was frequently called by Europeans, offered the most stubborn resistance to all the peaceful attempts of Captain Schiel to bring him under the Boer Government. Finally, Captain Schiel lost all his influence with

Photo by Perrin, Pretoria.

THE LATE GENERAL PIET JOUBERT, COMMANDANT-GENERAL OF THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC.

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Magato, who became bolder and bolder in proportion as he regarded this treatment on the part of Captain Schiel as an indication of the weakness of the Government.

One day I received quite unexpectedly a letter from the general, which I was to read in two languages and explain three times to Magato in the presence of all the indunas of the country. Magato was already informed of this letter, which was to be the last one from the Government, and sent word to me that I would be welcome if I intended to visit him on my personal business; if, however, I had matters to lay before him which came from another direction—here he pointed towards Pretoria —I had better stay at home. He was, he said, much too ill to listen to anything from that direction. Thus this attempt failed also. Instead of his indunas he had called a number of small cattle-boys, whom he introduced to me with all ceremony as the greatest indunas of his country.

On my reading the letter in the Dutch language, Magato put his hands to his ears, interrupting me by exclaiming that they did not all know the language and did not want to listen to it. He asked me to talk the Bawenda language. He had also immediately taken the three points which mattered, and prevented me from reading the letter again. The general had written a really kind and fatherly letter, and had especially warned Magato not to listen to white agitators who desired to cause trouble between him and the Government, but would be unable to help him in time of need. He moreover invited him to go to Pretoria, where they

could discuss the matter and exchange their views as kings. In case Magato were prevented from going to Pretoria, the general offered, in spite of the long distance, to come to him, in order to discuss everything. The first point, which concerned Captain Schiel, he had explained to me, but asked me not to mention it to the general. But when I pointed to the concluding words of the letter, where the general called him his friend, he would not listen to anything more. Stamping his foot and spitting on the floor, he angrily exclaimed: "A friend of mine! He who desires to cut my throat!" With that he ran away, thus bringing the negotiations to an abrupt close.

Afterwards the chief induna (who was present during the whole proceeding) attached the letter to a long pole and publicly derided it. I was offered shelter for the night and a meal. My companion, however, who was a very near relative of Magato's, and had always stood by the Government, and had accompanied me of his own free-will, as he thought he might put in a word in favour of the proposal, became so angry at the failure of the proceedings that he asked me not to stay and not to accept any food, but to leave the place immediately. Therefore we led our horses down from the high mountain in the falling dusk, and went home silently and sorrowfully. Thereafter the general himself made a final attempt, and came to Spelonken. As his mission was a very important one, he included in his special retinue a number of influential men from Pretoria. Amongst these were Mr. Esselen, representing the Courts of

Justice; Mr. Leo Weinthal, chief Editor of the *Pretoria Press* newspaper; Mr. T. W. Beckett, an old friend of the Government, and at the same time the most important merchant in Pretoria; and a well-known resident in Spelonken, Mr. F. D. Gill. They were all quartered on Mr. Cooksley's fine estate, whence the general sent his aide-de-camp with an escort for Magato. But hardly had they crossed the Doorn River, when they were met by a black commando which prevented their further progress. Thereby Magato's fate was sealed. The Volksraad, however, delayed the war against Magato for certain special reasons.

Soon after these occurrences Magato suddenly died of poisoning. He had taken a poisonous medicine, which, according to the sender's instructions, was to be taken by drops. He had, however, swallowed the whole quantity at once, as he, like all blacks, did not think much of any medicine that has to be taken in water a few drops at a time. The poison did its work; but Magato had time enough left to appoint his favourite son Masmo as his successor. Masmo's mother was not Magato's first, but was his most important wife, and ruled over his second capital.

The general now held the country without bloodshed, for it was these districts which had asked Magato to listen to Joubert's advice. But immediately bad characters amongst the younger population hastened to the elder brother, Mpefo, in Kimberley. As a result he returned home without delay, and with the assistance of his friends drove his brother from the country. Masmo fled to

Government country, and Mpefo would no doubt have murdered him had he not been in the company of the old uncle Ralipasa. The three subchiefs and relatives of Magato, who in accordance with the latter's desire had made Masmo the chief, were prosecuted by Mpefo. The one lost his land and his chieftaincy; the second fled to Government land; but the third, called Ratombo, in order to curry favour with Mpefo, one night attacked a Knobneusén kraal on Government land without any reason, and killed twenty-six loyal Government natives.

This induced the general to demand the extradition of the murderer Ratombo. Mpefo refused to comply with this request, and in the meantime the blacks attacked grazing Boer horses. Then the general could see no other way than to begin active hostilities. It took, however, a month to bring all the commandoes to the spot.

In spite of many warnings, I remained as the sole European amongst the natives. An escort which Commandant Wolmarans sent to me for personal protection turned out very nearly disastrous to safety. The commandant despatched his own son and twelve soldiers to live in my house in order to protect me in case of need. Wolmarans thought that this part of the country was more peaceful towards him; but just the reverse was the fact. The guard stayed for one night only, for early on the next morning the whole place was surrounded by armed natives who, ready to fire, demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Boers. By my precaution in announcing, according to

Bawenda custom, the arrival of my guests the previous night to all the Bawenda officials, and in consequence of my mediation having caused the withdrawal of the Boers, I regained the confidence of the natives.

Great was the rejoicing of the natives. They all hastened towards the river fords and other crossings in order to render them impassable for waggons, horses, and men. Messengers from Mpefo came and went without interrogation, and all good news was received with rejoicings and immensely exaggerated. But there occurred many scenes which did not at all contribute towards my feeling comfortable. His chief therefore ordered the inhabitants of the surrounding kraals to remain at home for his protection, in case the others should fly to the mountains, and he threatened with confiscation of their property all who would not obey his order. During this siege the general sent me letters for all sub-chiefs, telling them that all bloodshed would be on their heads if they would not come to him. These letters were laughed at. Some chiefs even refused to accept them. The second series of these letters set the people thinking more seriously, but the third made them somewhat frightened.

Thereupon some of them revealed to me Mpefo's plan of campaign, and assured me that it was only fear of Mpefo which prevented them complying with the general's wishes. But Mpefo announced that he would murder them if they did not act according to his programme. In order to secure speedy success, the general was to occupy the

stronghold where Mpefo's capital was situated and take the latter prisoner, as he then would have taken the whole country, according to Bawenda custom, and nobody would fight, the whole country being then regarded as lost. The chiefs would then under guidance submit to the general if he would engage not to punish them.

Under extremely difficult circumstances I immediately despatched a letter to the general telling him all I had heard. The messenger, an old faithful Kaffir called Moses, who had grown up in the service of the Boers, was promised an ox as reward for his journey, and as he knew Dutch he was able to report several things to the general by word of mouth. The general was effusively grateful, assured the chiefs of his clemency in case they kept their word—in which he was not deceived—and gave some instructions in case things should turn out differently. Shortly after, the capital of Mpefo was burned down; after a fierce bombardment and attack by the Boer commandoes, fugitives spread all over the country. The general paid no heed to anything but the pursuit of Mpefo, and endeavoured to get near Mpefo by a roundabout way of 60 miles, *via* Schewasse, as he had to keep on the only possible road on account of the artillery. When passing he sent to me the short message: "Have passed; shall wait at Schewasse." This was a short but weighty note for all. Now it was all-important speedily to induce the four nearest chiefs to fulfil their promise to the general—a task which was only attained with difficulty. They were, I may point out, greatly frightened, and a fifth only followed,

trembling with fear that the general would have them shot. On our way I had to protect them against attacks on the part of the Boers, who for different reasons wanted to do them harm. I myself was also scorned, and asked why I did not leave the natives to their fate in the mountains. Loud laughter and merriment, however, on the part of the Boer generals greeted me when I arrived with my chequered party of fat chiefs at the Mission station of Schewasse.

The general first made a speech before a large assembly, telling them that they had to thank God for having had men around them who guided them. He was now bound to his promise and would not be able to punish them. His intention had been to send his commandoes all over the country and destroy all the villages. But things had developed differently, and nothing remained but the drawing up of the treaties, which would have to be signed by the indunas, and be then without delay despatched to the Government in Pretoria, whilst he would go in pursuit of Mpefo.

The example of these chiefs, who on returning had much to tell of the general's kindness, was followed by all the others. Mpefo was driven out of his stronghold by the general, but unfortunately escaped unpunished to Mashonaland; a fact that deeply grieved the general. Had the war taken a different turn all the natives would have followed Mpefo's example, and after a useless struggle would have flown into Mashonaland, leaving the country empty of natives.

This is the story of the short Mpefo war which

to many Europeans has hitherto been a puzzle and wholly unrealised. General Joubert found the advice good, though it came from natives, and did not think too much of himself to refuse to follow it, thus speedily gaining the victory without the necessity of shedding blood on his side.

General Joubert's personality was fascinating and commanded confidence. He really loved the natives; and notwithstanding his great severity when such was necessary, he treated them with absolute justice, and cared about even minute matters. One morning when we were at the early hour of six o'clock already treating with chiefs—when I acted as the general's interpreter—the Commissioner appeared with his Knobneuse indunas, whom he presented to the general. When he mentioned the name of the first one, the general excitedly jumped up from his chair, went out of the tent, and in the presence of the whole assembly forbade henceforward to call the man by that name, as it had a bad meaning. He thereupon gave the man another name, which the whole assembly had to repeat once, and ordered that this name was in future to be used. My own messenger to Joubert, who travelled amongst great dangers, tells even to-day, with the greatest satisfaction, of his reception by the general, who in consequence of the dangers gave him an escort, which accompanied him for a considerable part of the return journey.

But the Europeans also appreciated General Joubert's impartiality and benevolence. His great successes were due to the fact that he always, before entering upon any enterprise, gathered all

available information, no matter whence it came, and then acted upon this information without fail.

How different things became soon after the recent war, when officials who were entire strangers to the country came to govern it! They affected—which was foolish—to know everything without asking or being coached by anybody, and generally built castles in the air. On my first visit to Spelonken, when I went to the Commissioner's office accompanied by an unimportant under-chief, the latter was immediately offered a chair and served with coffee or tea, whereas I was kept standing and got no refreshment. The native felt this inequality, offered me the chair, which I left unused, and disappeared with his cup into some dark corner. For the entertainment and surprise of his people he may, on his return, have probably told them all about the change in the Government and the new treatment.

What efforts have not been made by the Boers to catch the above-mentioned Ratombo, who murdered twenty-six Knobneusen? They even employed some of the conquered natives to catch him, in order to put him under lock and key. The new administrators, however, quietly opened the gates of the jail and allowed this murderer to walk about free and unpunished. Mpefo, a second Dinizulu, who secretly undermines the contentment of others, was allowed to be smuggled into the country by Europeans who profited from him; his presence in the country as if nothing had happened has, moreover, been sanctioned by the new régime granting him a *location*, whereas he should rather pay the

penalty which formerly did not reach him, or stay out of the country. These are matters which cause men who know the blacks, and care about the welfare of the country, to shake their heads in astonishment, and to make them anxious lest this treatment may find a retribution. To those who have had experience of native guile and native conspiracies, it is an axiom that black chiefs ought never to be allowed to employ lawyers in criminal or other actions. A black is his own and a very skilful advocate; and should he have quite suddenly to make a speech for his defence in the House of Commons or the Lords, he would be able to do this without any help, and in quite an impromptu manner would clearly and distinctly do so without any nervousness or lapse of memory, whereas his lawyer could only plead second-hand from a brief.

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The Native Problem

Many Europeans do not know even at present which place or position to accord to the blacks. Although they are the original conquerors of this country, they are everywhere under authority, in name at any rate. On the other hand, if they had no authority over them, they would, as surely as the sun shines, exterminate one another by continuous inter-tribal fights. Once when I had a religious conversation with a Boer, and a native who had listened expressed his consent, the Boer told him to be quiet, for the reason that he and his kin had been cursed by their father, Ham. "The lot of the sons of Ham shall be servitude" was the patriarchical *ipse dixit* by Noah, when he was reviewing the reorganisation of the different nations.

Many things in South Africa turn out quite differently from all expectations, so that men cannot comprehend them, although they may have seemingly overlooked nothing to ensure success. Through all the ages a man's possessions have not been his absolute property incontestably. This applies in great measure to South Africa's case. Not only has a man to defend himself there against plagues, but the very flora of the country suffers from them.

And to what dangers is man not there exposed? It is sometimes a sinister picture that meets our eyes, and many a dark shadow might be added if it were intended to draw an exhaustive picture of

the whole continent. Gold and precious stones dazzle the sight of many a one, but those who really know, turn their backs now and then upon the problem of the country with a shudder; for the colour question, like many of the plagues and pests in South Africa, sometimes seems insoluble. Allied thereto is another racial problem.

African Ethnology

In Africa, in that country of discoveries, there still exists a doubt at least, if not more, upon the ethnological essence. One cannot avoid the often striking similarity between the African and the Jewish types. Again and again we find laws and customs amongst the Africans which force the impression that there has been at some former time some kind of connection between the Blacks and the ancient Hebrews. In the Balemba tribe, one may find especially distinct traces of such a contact or connection. Remainders of this tribe are found amongst the Bawenda as well as in Rhodesia, and (as I have been told) particularly in the Congo. Here they keep strictly separated from the Bawenda, and will hardly allow any marriage of one of their family to a Bawenda, whereas, on the other hand, they receive others into their community. They also have the circumcision, and claim a certain authority before the others; and although they are subjects of Bawenda, they will rarely or never do socage for them. They eat no pork, and avoid all meat of animals which have cloven hoofs, and animals which do not chew the cud. Moreover, they do not touch the meat of fallen animals, and discriminate amongst fish and fowls. They have their own butchers, who kill the animals according to the Jewish rite, as if to render it "koscher." Formerly they were, it is evident, a great commercial people, and there still exists among them, as well

as the Bawenda, that ancient Israelite law, the "Levirate marriage." If the elder brother dies, the younger brother as the heir takes unto himself the deceased's wife as his property, also her children and the whole inheritance, and provides for the issue.

There are also proverbs and peculiarities in actions which strongly savour of Israelite and Biblical soil. Thus stories and tales from the Old Testament are without difficulty translatable into the language of these tribes. The conditions also throw some light upon the meaning of different expressions and names in the Bible. For instance, the statements in the Bible relating to the different names of the father-in-law of Moses, or the expression "brothers of Jesus" which gives rise to so many objections on the part of the uninitiated. For all cousins, male or female, from the mother's family are called brothers and sisters, as well as the children of the many wives of one man. The Hebrew also performs his important work in the morning, and, as in Israel, all law business is transacted sitting. Further, the tales of the blacks are always very voluble and full of parables and word-pictures. At the gate, as it was in Israel, public opinion is formed. Of less importance is perhaps the custom that the elder provides for the younger, and the dominating custom of in time procuring wives for the sons. There are also "deliverers" to be found here, who are relatives whose duty it is in certain cases to support needy relatives or take over obligations of deceased members of the family. As only recently, after lengthy researches, the original relationship of the Semitic and Indo-Germanic languages has been

proved, in the same way science will at some future time report on the relationship of these languages to the Semitic. Only to mention one feature: as in the Hebrew, one finds in these languages the same original forms of deflection and a wealth of deflected original forms.

Now, it is a well-known fact that there is a mystery as to the whereabouts of a number of Jewish tribes which have been lost in the course of the centuries. Their traces were thought to have been discovered partly in India, partly in Africa; and the development of Africa and the discovery of the curious ruins at Zimbabwe in Mashonaland have induced many to think of the Ophir of the Bible, whither King Solomon and King Hiram of Phœnicia sent their ships (1 Kings x. 22) to fetch gold, peacocks, and ivory. In the first Book of Kings, ix. 27, 28, we also hear that the servants of Hiram were good and experienced mariners.

The opinion of others, that these ruins are of Portuguese origin, appears less plausible. Of importance for the Ophir journeys is perhaps the note that the journey took three years, as well as the statement of Herodotus that the travellers to Ophir always had the sun behind them the nearer they approached their destination—a circumstance which always occurs if one has crossed the Line on a journey towards the South. The tower-like building on the eastern part of the ruins, which is of conical shape and therefore needs no roof, has been declared at first sight as a column to the Phœnician Sun-god, by a friend of mine who

inspected it. And if Dr. Carl Peters, according to a report which I happened to read in the *Glasgow Gazette*, spoke of stone coffins which look very ancient, many things appear to be in favour of the Ophir theory.

In any case, there still remains a wide field for discoveries, and the future may perhaps have much new information in store for us. All observations and suggestions hitherto may serve as an inducement to others living in other parts of Africa to follow up parallels, institute comparisons, and thus help forward the solution of this problem. ..

Advantages and Disadvantages of Civilisation

To speak or write about the advantages of civilisation is perhaps the same as if one were to descant upon the use of light and warmth. As, however, the merits of a picture are often enhanced by a dark background, the changes for the better of a country where darkness, trouble, and war were once rampant (until recent years) may be more easily understood by bringing before the reader's eyes such dark pictures and cruelties of the Bawenda as the author has personally witnessed.

One Sunday morning I accompanied a neighbour to the capital of the old chief Pafuri. We intended to put in a good word in favour of the cessation of the war which kept the whole population from their work in the fields, and had interrupted all traffic on the roads. When we spoke to the chief, and had, in consequence of the evil smell emanating from the corpses which were thrown into old maize-holes, changed places with him, suddenly the big war-drum sounded, and a slain enemy was carried within the gate on long poles. Hardly had the chief caught sight of the body than he jumped up, rushed at the corpse like a wild animal, tore it down on to the ground, sat on it, and beat it in order to relieve his anger. Soon after this dancers arrived and performed a triumphal war-dance. They consisted of old men and women only; for those alone are entitled to take part in the war-dance who had already killed or poisoned some one. We left the

cruel scene without taking leave of the people, who had already gone frantic with excitement; and we returned home without having achieved our object, only hoping that time might remedy all this.

On another occasion, late one afternoon, a little boy came to me and prayed for his father, who was fettered and was to be flung from a high rock that evening. A witch-doctor had at the great dance designated him as a "Moloi," whom revenge did not allow to remain alive. In company with a European who happened to be my guest, and a black servant who carried my rifle, I hastened to the capital of the country, Ngaba, which was situated on a high mountain, one hour distant. There I found the man lying in the big Council Hall, his arms and legs tied, and watched by armed guards. Having cut his bonds and shown him the way to flight, I went to the chief's residence, where the bad judges were still assembled, and gave them a lecture on their evil behaviour, and very nearly came to blows with the chief, who showed me out.

The chief Shewasse killed seven women, who had been pointed out as "valvi," in one day, without anybody troubling about it. Soon after, he sent a large force of his warriors to rob and plunder the subjects of three of his under chiefs, who lived some distance away. The warriors took everything away, and even tore the scanty dresses from the people. They also drove off the cattle and goat herds. To the deepest disgrace it must be reported that two white men took part in this outrage, which thereby gained in importance and achieved great renown.

This picture would not be complete if I were to suppress the fact that, in the past, even Government officials far away have been known not only not to prevent murders, but to profit from them. Once, when my own chief went to war, I sent a messenger after him to warn him that in due time he would be called to account. He however sent me a reply, intended to reassure me, that he had paid £5 for this war, and had therefore nothing to fear!

On the occasion of a trial of the chief Shewasse, when I acted as witness and interpreter, he looked quite indifferently at the big book into which his guilt was to be written. To a question why he had acted so unjustly, he replied to the judge with evident innermost satisfaction: "For the same reason as you last year acted in my country, when you . . . and even borrowed my horse for this purpose." When, thereupon, there was a stoppage in the taking down of this piece of evidence, Shewasse burst into a loud laugh, and, turning to his indunas, said: "There, you see that he does not write down the evil he has done. He only wants to know and write down our misdeeds." Unfortunately the man was right; and an important action remained without result and was broken off.

All these examples may be sufficient for the reader to form an idea of the sad condition of a country where blacks are left to themselves, and govern themselves, when they are not governed by a European Power.

This land of war is now a country of peace, where friend and foe shake hands and everybody

may peacefully follow his occupation A traveller is no longer robbed on the high-road, as often happened in the past, and everybody may sleep unmolested in his house, without the necessity of barricading the entrances of the village for fear of hostile raids. And just as here the arrival of civilisation has brought about such changes, it will be in other parts of the Dark Continent, which will soon be dark no longer.

It must, however, be admitted that culture has many a disadvantage. By their intercourse with Europeans, the blacks become more and more avaricious. The present régime is not so severe compared with their own, and makes the people more lax in respect of their good social institutions. They also observe the frauds by white men upon one another, or on the blacks. As, for instance, a white man persuaded a chief to give him a sum of money for which he would procure a coining apparatus. Gold he was assured that he had in his own country, proof of which was to be shown on the return of that enterprising white merchant; so that henceforward, the chief was assured, he would be enabled to strike his own money. The money was handed to the white man, but the chief is still awaiting his return.

Civilisation also makes the people lazy in manual labour. Thus they nowadays hardly ever forge any pickaxe or carve their wooden spoons or plates. They can hardly make their baskets and mats. All articles which they absolutely need they can buy for a little money in the European stores.

Epilogue

A people like the Bawenda, who only recently came under the rule of the Boers, and therefore know but only little of government by the white people, ought of course to be treated in a paternal way. Above all, the most important laws ought from time to time to be read and explained to the people in all districts. The efforts of the cunning chiefs are directed to keeping their people in the dark, so that for cases of emergency they can always keep a back door open by pretending to have acted in ignorance. They also try to keep old customs, such as child-murder, alive as long as possible. What, it may be asked, is the use of one Government representative amongst so many natives, when his chief care is the collection of the taxes, and when this takes up his whole time? Where or how can he find leisure to visit the natives, to arbitrate if they quarrel? For they bring hardly the thousandth part of their quarrels before the Government, partly for fear of their chiefs, and partly in consequence of the vast distances which they would have to travel. Frequently a native has to travel for many miles and days in order to procure a simple permit, and, after the stress of his journey, to climb the steep hill far away from the main road. During the fever season many a native has on this journey caught the fever when travelling through the dewy grass (which only becomes dry by noon) and

through the thick undergrowth and full rivers. Frequently, also, he is unexpectedly kept waiting for days (when he is witness or plaintiff) without having any opportunity of procuring food. This has also often caused death or serious illness. The natives ought to be better protected from their chiefs and made more independent of them. In many districts the chiefs still oppress and sweat their subjects in the old old way.

As there are inspectors of roads, mines, forests, and other branches of administration who look after the interests of the country, there ought to be, above all in far away and strongly populated districts like this, men who know the country and the people from their own experience, and enjoy the confidence of the natives. These men would have to visit the natives from time to time to exhort them to work, to hear and settle complaints and differences, and to make public new laws. They might also report matters to the Commissioner, make suggestions for better regulations, and inquire into matters at his instruction.

Such men would also prevent the excesses of the black policemen, who frequently take bribes and make the natives their helpless tools, tying them up without any reason, taking them with them for miles and releasing them at their pleasure. In no case ought black policemen to be sent by themselves on any responsible mission into some far away district, as they can neither read nor write, and consequently are unable to examine passports and certificates, so that they often cause harm and trouble to the natives. For this kind of

work whites should be employed as superintendents, with native assistants. And where this is impossible, at least one white man ought to be employed in the native office to receive the complaints and requests of the natives, thus taking the most important work out of the hands of the native policemen, who suppress, delay, and distort matters, and keep natives back in the country who might desire to complain about the policemen, but are now entirely unable to do so.

The country being so extensive, the utility of the work of such men amongst the natives would be great, as the Kaffirs have to pay taxes often without deriving any benefit therefrom. The natives themselves would then look upon the Government as upon a real father, and joy and contentment would daily increase.

The life of the black sometimes resembles a beautiful lake in which the sun is reflected, but in which, after the slightest movement or a storm, filth and dirt rise to the surface. Notwithstanding all apparently genuine exterior politeness and deference, the natives carry in their bosoms all the worst of human passions. Nevertheless they are well worth our closer interest; and many of the descriptions contained in the chapters of this book may have been unknown to many a European. The literature on this important subject is not only defective, but still scant. Nevertheless I trust I have enabled the reader to form an idea of the life, feeling, and customs of the Bawenda tribes. Should there be a general demand for a more exhaustive description of the psychology of the African natives, this essay

can easily be supplemented and elaborated. The judgment of the blacks and their abilities are still very variegated; but in view of the consistently increasing *rapprochement* between the different peoples and races and the progress of culture and civilisation, this word of explanation may prove to be of service.

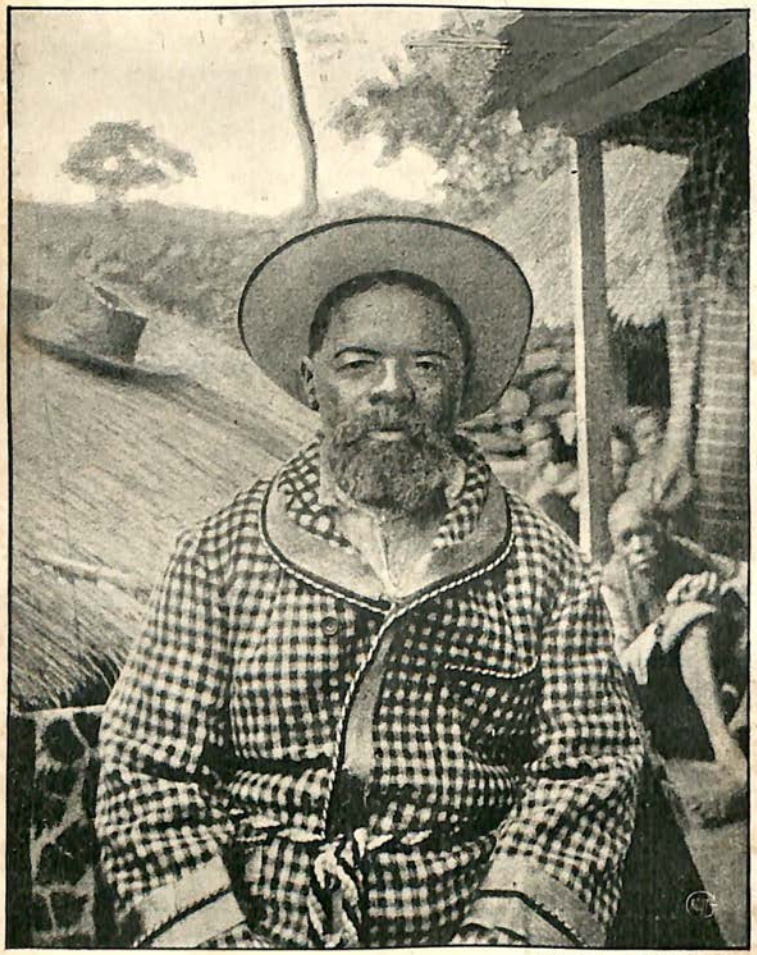

Photo by Leo Weinthal, 1894.

THE LATE PARAMOUNT CHIEF, MAGATO OF BAWENDALAND, ZOUTPANSBERG (KNOWN AS "THE LION OF THE NORTH"), AT HIS KRAAL, KOLUMBANE.

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APPENDIX

A GREAT BAWENDA CHIEF

MAGATO, "THE LION OF THE NORTH"

In view of the highly interesting description of Bawendaland and its people given by Mr. Wessman in the foregoing chapters of this work, the following despatches, reproduced from the *Pretoria Press* of June 9, 1894, when the late Chief Magato, father of the present chief Mpefu, was interviewed near his stronghold in Bawendaland by the translator and compiler of this little volume, may be of interest in connection with the chapters devoted to his tribes.

L. W.

EXTRACT FROM "THE PRETORIA PRESS"
(WEEKLY EDITION), JUNE 9, 1894

THE NORTHERN TROUBLE

MAGATO'S STRONGHOLD

"THE LION OF THE NORTH" INTERVIEWED

JOHANNESBURG, Friday (from Press Special, per special native runner from the Spelonken, Wednesday night).

I have just returned from Magato's mountain, where I have interviewed the chief on the position. We were most kindly received, and in the course of a two hours' indaba, and in reply to my pointed questions, Magato said that he acknowledged President Kruger as his father, and was quite willing to pay taxes. He had done so, and was collecting now to pay more, but that he would not remit to Captain Schiel, but direct to the Government. When asked whether he would supply active assistance against Malaboch, if commandeered by General Joubert, Magato replied evasively: "If Paul asks me

I SHALL ASSIST,

but will obey no one else."

The Press commissioner wished to know if Magato would move with his tribe into locations if requested to do so by the Government?

The chief replied that it would not be satisfactory to him to do so. He would not exactly say what he would do; he must see for himself when the Boer commandoes came.

Whereupon the Press man inquired if there was truth in the rumour that Magato had written to the British Government for assistance, to which the chief answered that if that were so, it was not likely that he would not have paid taxes to President Kruger, for whom he personally appears to have the greatest respect.

Q. Is it true that you have sent a commando or any impis of your people to assist the rebellious Malaboch in the Blueberg, as was recently reported to Pretoria from Pietersburg?

Magato replied that Malaboch must take his punishment, as he deserved it. The responsibility lay on his own head. He (Magato) and his own people had nothing to do with Malaboch.

Q. I asked: 'Supposing, Chief, that President Kruger and his Government should make war on you and send a commando to bring you to reason, what would you do?"

Magato looked very knowing, when he replied: "I would tell you again that I am quite loyal to the President, and that

I WANT NO WAR

or any trouble, and I wish you particularly to tell this to the President himself."

These were the main points of the interview which I am wiring to you, although many other interesting things were touched upon. September and Stephanus, two of the chief's indunas, acted as interpreters. Our "indaba" took place at Kolombane, one of Magato's best and fortified kraals, facing the high mountain and krantz known as "The Stronghold." After the meeting he sent a black goat to our party. I requested permission to photograph him. He at first demurred considerably, but finally consented. I took

SIX PLATES OF MAGATO,

one of him alone, and another with one of his wives, and several more in a group with some of us. He had never been photographed before, and his people viewed the act with open expressed discontent.

The mountain on which is the chief's stronghold and main kraal is well inside his territory, which appears simply splendidly suited for pastoral and agricultural operations. There is any amount of water available, and most of the rocky krantzes are quite inaccessible. Any military occupation which may be necessary one day, even with a powerful artillery, would not be accomplished without tremendous loss of life if the stronghold had to be stormed. Over 500 new rifles have come in during the last month from Delagoa Bay, large amounts of ammunition and food-supplies are stored, and it is said there are enormous caves at the back of this range large enough to hold the people and their cattle for years—if necessary—should a guerilla war ensue.

IT IS THE OPINION

of the oldest English resident in the Spelonken that one single reverse on the part of the Boers would be the signal for not less than 100,000 Kaffirs to rally round the Magato chiefs of the Zoutpansberg, which would mean nothing less than a native war of long duration. I am told that Magato is prepared for every emergency. He certainly does not want to fight; but if forced, it would take at least 5000 men to operate successfully in these rugged hills. The result even then would be at the best very problematical. The Government certainly requires a man here who will deal with the greatest possible tact with these aggressive tribes, and then

A PEACEABLE SOLUTION

of the problem is still within the range of probability. The Boers residing in the Spelonken below the Berg have

worked themselves up to a considerable state of fear, for which there as yet seems to be no tangible reason.

Magato's sons, with fifteen waggons, are at present *en route* to Johannesburg with timber, etc. They left here eight days ago, a sure sign that the chief is not bent on war. But he holds the sole power of preventing a great native outbreak in the North, and should be treated accordingly by the Government.

THE PARTY WHO VISITED HIM

consisted of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Cooksley, of Lovedale Park, Spelonken; Mr. Pogge, of the Gravelotte Claims fame; and Mr. Leo Weinthal, chief Editor of the *Pretoria Press*. They were all most kindly received.

There is no doubt that the war scare is largely manufactured by interested parties in this district.

EXTRACT FROM "THE PRETORIA PRESS"
JUNE 9, 1894

THE MAGATO VISIT

(Special Despatch)

FROM SPELONKEN TO THE STRONGHOLD

HAVING telegraphed from Pietersburg the chief points of interest in the personal interview I had with Magato, it is now only necessary to give a verbal report of the two hours' conversation which our party had with the chief at his kraal on Wednesday morning 30th May.

LOVEDALE PARK ESTATE

A great number of visitors will recognise in Lovedale Park the charming estate of Mr. J. S. Cooksley at the frontier of the Klein Spelonken. For eighteen years Mr. and Mrs. Cooksley have resided at this outpost of civilisation, which may fairly be called the real frontier of the South African Republic with respect to the great adjacent native territories. During this period the worthy couple have dispensed royal hospitality to all and sundry passing their way, and many is the fever-stricken digger who owes his life and the restoration of his strength to the Samaritans of the Lovedale Park sanatorium. A fuller description of this pleasant retreat will be given in a future issue. Sufficient be it for the present to say that on arrival there on the afternoon of the 27th May, and it

being intimated that the writer was particularly anxious to interview the paramount chief of the Zoutpansberg district at his own home, a native runner was immediately despatched from Lovedale Park to Magato's stronghold, a distance of nearly 25 miles.

THE DESPATCH RUNNER

The messenger must have reached the mountain on the afternoon of the following day, and the interval was occupied in exploring the pleasant surroundings of the Spelonken, including Captain Schiel's residence and "Terry Fitzgerald's" farm. On returning from our explorations on Monday evening we found Magato's chief induna and relative, September, awaiting us at Lovedale Park, he having been sent by the chief on horseback, on the arrival of our messenger, with an invitation to come as soon as possible. Everything was accordingly prepared for a two days' trip. The weather looked very threatening, while the mountain itself was enveloped in a huge white cloth of fog.

THE DEMON OF "FUNK"

Great efforts were made by all of us to obtain a competent interpreter, but neither "Terry Fitzgerald," a Spelonken-born Boer resident of decidedly ancestral Irish appearance in his physiognomy, nor any one else, could be got for love or money to accompany the party to the mountain, being afraid of their lives to venture there. On Mr. Cooksley telling them of our intention of "bearding the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall," they were thunder-struck at the very idea, it being understood that hitherto Magato had always met officials and friends, not on his mountain, but at a place named Rietvlei on the flats, and some ten miles below the mountain range.

We left on Tuesday morning about ten o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. Cooksley in a spider with four horses, and our party in a Cape cart belonging to Messrs. Zeederberg, and

drawn by four smart mules, the conveyance having been kindly placed at our disposal by that courteous firm.

THE BORDER STREAM

After a drive of ten miles through a thick, scrubby country, Doorn River, the famous border "rubicon" of Magato's territory, was reached. It is here that Fort Hendrina ought really to have been placed if the *raison d'être* of its existence is the protection of the official frontier. At the present time Lovedale Park rather protects Fort Hendrina, which looks anything but imposing, consisting as it does of a galvanised iron house, a very crooked flag-staff, and two rondavel mud huts, being absolutely useless in every way. At the Doorn River Drift a mimosa tree is pointed out as the spot where General Joubert told Magato some time ago that he would do all kinds of things to enforce the will of the Pretoria Powers.

Promises and threats made by officials to the Kaffirs hereabouts have been fairly frequent during the last seventeen years, and by reason of their continued non-fulfilment it is now very difficult to convince the Kaffirs in these northern districts that the Government will ever take determined action, as nearly every year threats have been held out, and—nothing has been done.

A MOUNTAIN ROAD

On the northern side of Doorn River for four or five miles the country is thickly covered with bush, and the road is of a most rugged description. Several minor chiefs occupy kraals under the kopjes, which form natural fortresses, and which contain the outposts of the Makatees, as from there almost everything going on near and far can be seen. On the Transvaal side of the river such excellent points of vantage unfortunately do not exist, and, should trouble arise in this direction, the natives would have decidedly the best of the situation at the start. Mamamela's kraal is most picturesquely situated high over

the very river, and offers special facilities in the lines indicated above. After leaving the bushy country we passed into the Ten Mile Flats, which lead to the approach of the mountain ranges known as the true Zoutpansbergen, and which are in this particular point, and for a distance of at least seventy miles, also known as Magato's Berg.

TO THE CHIEF

The Magato mountain consists of a series of terraces, freely fissured with deep ravines, and richly covered with verdure in the shape of trees and scrub. The ascent is very steep, and the view from the nearer terraces is very beautiful. The soil is of rich alluvial nature, and there is an abundance of pure and running water. The gorges abound with game of all kinds, including buffaloes, leopards, and a large variety of antelopes. In point of fact this part may be truly termed the "Canaan" of the Transvaal. I shall endeavour on some future occasion to give a slight sketch of the zoology and botany of this region. On the flats, which are mainly composed of tufty ground, there are many mealie plantations, and several outlying kraals, the natives of which go in largely for the cultivation of mealies, Kaffir-corn, and tobacco—the latter flourishing amazingly. The gardens as a rule are very neatly kept. Large herds of cattle of a good stamp were to be seen grazing on the flats, and women and children were to be seen busily tending the gardens, building huts, and engaged in similar light occupations. September, Magato's induna, who was our *avant courier*, led us up the mountain on a road lately constructed by Magato himself for the accommodation of the numerous waggons he owns, and which are despatched regularly to the Rand, laden with the valuable Mapani wood, which fetches a good price.

BAWENDALAND WITHIN THE BERG

After crossing two terraces in ascending the ranges we caught a glimpse of a beautiful valley, over which towered

the Hanglip mountain, known as the Stronghold. It is right under the brow of this lowering kop, the peculiar contour of which is visible for sixty miles from the Spelonken, that the paramount chief's most important kraal is situated. This is the kraal in which Madame Magato senior resides, and it is stated, on the reliable authority of those who have frequent intercourse with the "Lion of the North," that the chief—feared by so many—is considerably under the influence of—what would be termed in white man's land—"petticoat government," although most probably in this special case the petticoats would be conspicuous by their absence. The krantzes dipping below the terraces leading to the summit of Hanglip are most inaccessible. The Makatees are fully alive to the fact that storming them from below could not be accomplished without the assailants being decimated.

PEEPS FROM A STRATEGIC POINT OF VIEW

I looked around especially for a position in which a field-gun might be placed with advantage, and found none in which even a cannon with a six-mile range could cover this wonderfully-made natural fortress, unless other krantzes almost equally inaccessible were first mounted. Right opposite the Stronghold another large kraal is visible, divided from the chief's abode by an extensive valley.

THE FAVOURITE OUT OF FIFTEEN

In this kraal Magato's youngest and favourite wife, Maholie, a daughter of the Matok chief Ramahoop, resides. It was here where we drew up and outspanned—all glad to rest after the arduous drive. September was evidently much upset at the fact that the chief had not arrived. Swift messengers were immediately despatched to the mountain opposite, stating that our party would again leave in an hour, and it would be necessary for the chief to come at once if he wished to see us. To

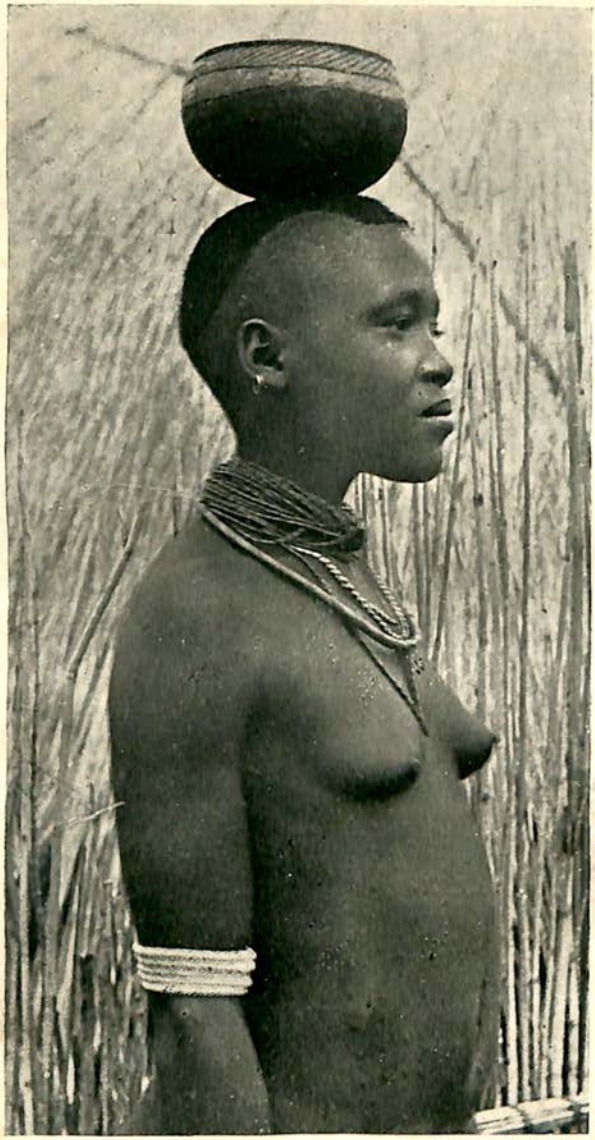

Photo by Leo Weinthal.

MAHOLIE, MAGATO'S YOUNGEST WIFE.
The Favourite of Fifteen Royal Wives.

To face page 151.

enforce respect from the native in Africa, the white man must show firmness coupled with politeness, but, above all, no tendency towards flattery. During the half-hour we were waiting for the chief our party was very hospitably entertained by Mohalie, a goodly-made and kindly-faced young native woman, and an impromptu Makatese luncheon was served up in the square house, which in every Makatese or Bawenda kraal is the distinguishing token of the royal residence. Kolumbane Kraal was splendidly protected by wooden Mapani poles lashed firmly and closely together with leather reims, these palisades constituting a perfect maze and a fortification not to be despised. The cattle kraal, which is situated in the centre, is raised some four feet above the ordinary level. So closely interlaced are the poles forming the palisades that daylight would not penetrate through them, and when it is stated that these stockades are mostly twenty feet high, some idea may be formed of the part they might be called on to play in the event of the kraal being attacked.

DEJEUNER A LA BAWENDA

Our impromptu luncheon consisted of a first course of Kaffir beer, which Mohalie carried in personally in a large calabash, and presented the national drink first to the visitors, who took a sip, after which it made its way round to the attendant members of the royal family, who all made a fairly good sample of its contents. Well-fried buffalo "biltong" followed, with some very daintily prepared ground-nuts—a native dish, which might well be included in the menu of a leading hotel. Coffee—of a kind—was then handed round, being certainly not of best Mocca quality. While the great déjeûner to the distinguished white visitors was going on, some old Kaffir women crawled quietly into the house, and watched us with evident interest. It was apparently a matter of etiquette for Bawenda ladies to crawl "on all fours" in

the presence of the royal consort; and the royal consort herself, later on during the afternoon, on the arrival of her august lord and master, also descended to the humble position and greatest meekness, although previously in her intercourse with our party she had been gay and frisky. As a Bawenda housewife Mohalie certainly was an excellent specimen and deserved every credit, for her house was as clean as a new pin, and meals could have been—as the old proverb says—literally eaten off the floor, without qualms of any risk.

CHIEF MAGATO ARRIVES

After an hour or so we heard melodious native calls from the other side of the great valley. September said, "My chief is coming." For a long time we could see nothing, but afterwards found out the cause of the delay. It appeared that owing to the heavy fogs and the rain not a single horse fit for the chief could just then be found on the mountain, and accordingly Magato himself had to walk down to meet us, and, as a fact, expressed himself on his arrival as being greatly concerned at his not being punctual.

For a chief of Magato's standing to walk under such circumstances was a great compliment to his visitors, and one, according to his people at the kraal, never paid before to others. While we were still waiting the chief's arrival another shrill long cry came from below us, in the peculiar notes by which Kaffirs communicate with each other from long distances. September's smart little Basuto pony was immediately sent in the direction of the chief. Soon Magato rode up and entered the kraal, taking no notice whatever of our party, but presently sent out word that he would see us as soon as he had changed his clothes, having been soaked to the skin on his journey from the mountain. He was attended by two armed men, fully equipped with Snider rifles and well-filled bandoleers.

THE FIRST INDABA

Presently Magato received us at the entrance of the kraal. We followed the chief through the serpentine palisade walls to the house within, in which we had previously been entertained by the young wife Mohalie prior to his arrival. Magato sat down quietly and with great dignity on the stoep on a roll of matting, and through his chief induna expressed his sincere pleasure at seeing his old friend Cookesell (as Mr. Cooksley is known amongst the natives) and his wife. As it was now getting late, we told the chief that we would prefer to see him after daylight, in the morning. He gave us a very pressing invitation to remain at the kraal for the night, but we dispensed courteously of his hospitable offer, and went to the Store of Mr. Adolphus Wright, about four miles distant, to rest there until the morning. Soon the shades of night fell over the valley and silence reigned supreme.

THE NEXT DAY'S MEETING

When we rose early the following morning, the mountains were a grand sight in the bright early sunlight. At 7 A.M. September rode up, and said he had been instructed to conduct us to Kolumbane. On the previous evening the chief had sent a present of a black buck, which made a successful escape from its two wardens, and under any circumstances would have been too late for our supper, as the beast and its guardians only arrived about midnight. At eight o'clock we started for the kraal, and found Magato quite unceremoniously completing his morning ablutions, being attended by several of his intimate followers. After outspanning, we entered the kraal, and old Mr. Cooksley having opened the indaba with a friendly greeting, I presented the chief with a handsome rug, lined with gold braid, and a comfortable dressing-gown decorated in a similar manner.

Magato appeared much pleased with these marks of friendship, and after a long argument agreed to be

photographed, later on particularly requesting me to take him seated on the rug and clad in the smart gown.

After the actual interview was finished, the chief, turning to Mrs. Cooksley, said that he was glad to see his mother ("myn mama"), and that the moment he heard that she had come to him with friends, he walked down the mountain to greet her. His behaviour during the conversation, and indeed throughout, was very dignified and courteous, although he occasionally exhibited flashes of impatience and excitement on his induna's interpreting the questions to him.

THE CAMERA USED

There was considerable difficulty to induce him to be photographed; finally, Mrs. Cooksley asked his consent, and after a considerable amount of persuasion he agreed. I told him that I would accept no gift from him, which must have been rather a novel experience, as he is usually pestered for presents. Once convinced, the chief took kindly to the operation, and I got six plates of him, singly, with his wife, and in company with the indunas. Although he permitted his own portrait to be "taken," Magato evidently did not wish me to take a view of his mountain stronghold, for on my quietly turning the camera round to do so, great objection was most emphatically expressed by September, who almost knocked over my camera and prevented me from taking the view I much desired to take for General Joubert. I managed, however, to make a rough sketch of it, which was found useful afterwards during the troubles.

After a hearty hand-shaking, taking off his hat, Magato bade our party a cordial farewell, telling me that he hoped to hear again from me, and gave us several commissions to execute for him at the capital; also, a special greeting to His Honour the President.

LEO WEINTHAL.

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